OVERLORD [1] The undead king *Kugane Maruyama*

illustration by so-bin

オーバーロード 1 不死者の王

丸山くがね

The world is all yours.

［這個世界都是您的——］

納薩力克地下大墳墓
Underground large grave of Nazarick
【地下一～三層】墳墓
The 1st to 3rd basement
Grave
【地下四層】地底湖
The 4th basement
Underground lake
【地下五層】冰河
The 5th basement
Glacier
【地下六層】叢林
The 6th basement
The jungle
【地下七層】岩漿
The 7th basement
Lava
【地下八層】荒野
The 8th basement
The wilderness
【地下九層】皇家套房
The 9th basement
Royal Suite
【地下十層】王座
The 10th basement
Throne

Prologue

Facing the young girl and her little sister, the armored knight raised his sword. To have mercy was to take away a life in a single strike. Struck by the sunlight, the sword glistened high up in the air. The girl shut her eyes and bit down on her lower lip. Her expression showed that she never wished for this situation. She was simply accepting it since there was nothing she could do. If the girl had power of some sort, she would have used it on the man before her eyes and ran away. But… The girl had no such power. Thus there existed only one conclusion. The girl would surely perish here. The sword struck down… Yet she did not feel any pain.

The girl opened her tightly shut eyes. The first thing that the girl saw in her world was the sword that had stopped in its path downward. The next thing that entered her sight was its wielder. He had stopped in motion as though he were encased in ice. The knight's attention was no longer on the girl. The completely defenseless state of the knight clearly revealed the shock that surged inside him. As though led by the knight's gaze, the girl also turned her face toward the same direction.

Then… She saw despair. There was darkness. Pure darkness as thin as paper, yet of an unfathomable depth. It had emerged from the ground in an ovoid shape with its lower section cut. A scene that evoked mystique with indescribable apprehension. *A door?* That's what the girl thought after having seen it… Then after her heart beat once more, her thought was verified right. *Drippp*. Something fell from the darkness. The instant she realized what it was—

"Hiii—!" The girl let out a piercing shriek. An existence that no mortal could ever overcome. Red orbs swayed like turbid flames inside the hollow orbits of the white skull. As it looked at the two girls, they felt as though it was staring coldly at its prey. In its hands, devoid of flesh and skin, was a sacred yet fearsome staff of sovereign beauty. It was as though Death itself, draped in an ornate, jet-black robe, was born into this world with darkness from another world.

The air froze in the blink of an eye. It was as if time itself had frozen before the advent of an absolute being. The girl had forgotten to breathe as though her soul was stolen. In this situation, where even sense of time seemed to have vanished, the girl began hyperventilating and breathed as though gasping for air. *The Grim Reaper has come from the otherworld to take me away.* That's what the girl had thought, but she soon felt something was amiss. The knight that was after them had stopped moving as well.

"Urghh…" A quiet groan was heard. Who was it from? It felt like it could have been from herself, as well as her shivering little sister, and the knight with his sword raised before her eyes. Ever so slowly, its fingers, destitute of flesh with only their bones, reached out and pointed, not at the girls, but at the knight, as if to grab something. She wanted to stop looking, but she was too scared to do so. She felt she would witness something far more terrifying if she were to look away.

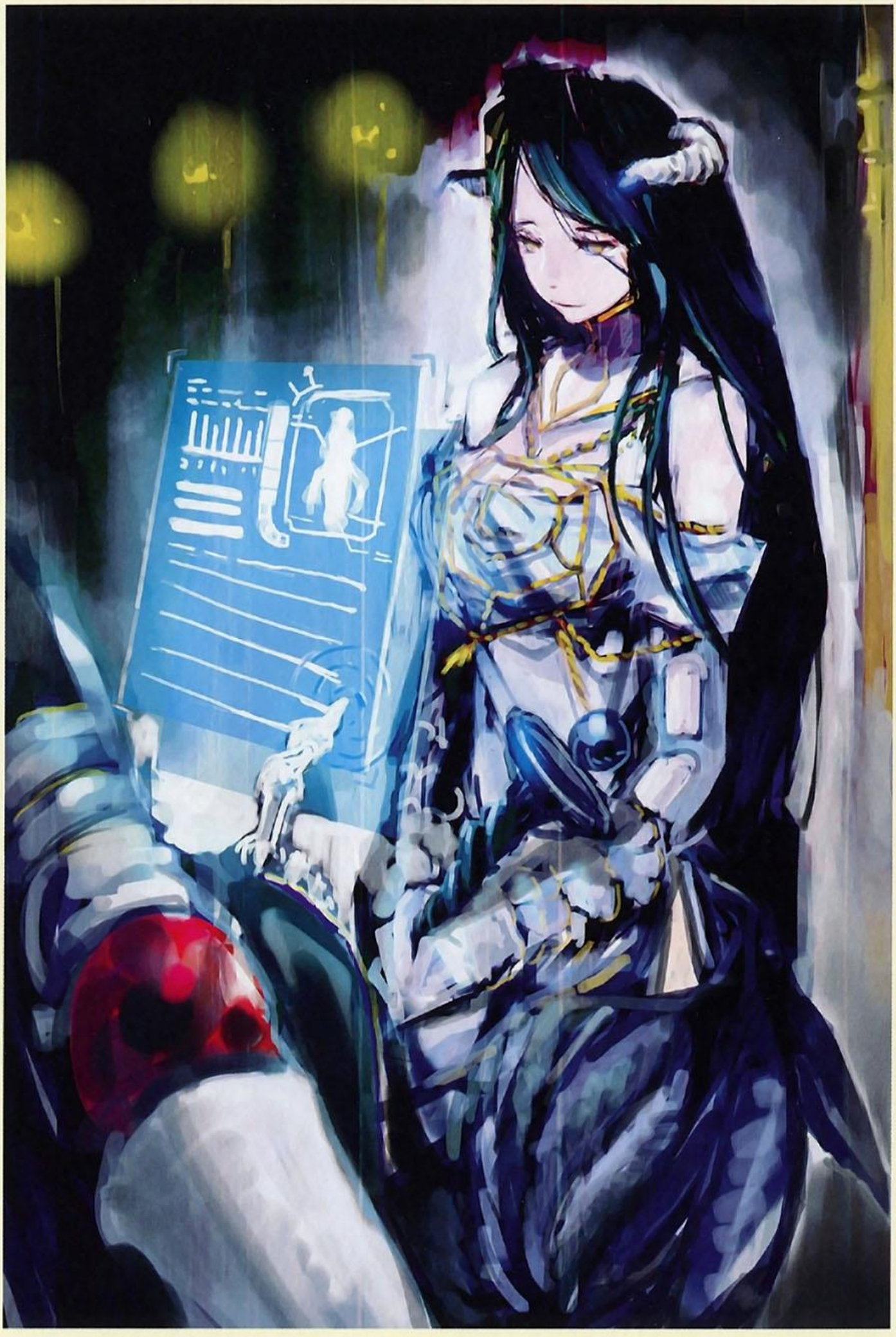
「Grasp Heart」. The death incarnate made a clasping gesture, and a loud metallic noise rang right next to the girl. She was afraid to avert her eyes to Death, but pushed by the tiny curiosity from her heart she moved her gaze and saw the knight laying on the ground. He was no longer moving. He was dead. Yes, dead.

The life-threatening crisis that had closed in on the girl disappeared just like that as if it was all a joke. However, she could not rejoice since Death had changed its shape and manifested itself in a more apparent form. Receiving the girl's frightened gaze, Death moved towards the girl. The darkness gathered in the center of her view rose.

It's going to envelop me. Thinking that, the girl hugged her little sister tightly. The thought of escaping was nowhere in her head now. If the opponent were a human, she could have taken action with a shred of hope. But the thing before her eyes was an existence that easily blew away such notion.

Please at least let me die a painless death. Praying was all she could do. Her little sister was clinging to her waist, quivering in terror. She wanted to save her, but she couldn't. She could only apologize for her powerlessness. She simply prayed that she wouldn't feel so lonely, for she was going with her.

And then—



第一章 開始與結束

Chapter 1: The End and the Beginning

Part 1

It was the year 2138 A.D., and the term DMMORPG was not only in existence, but also becoming more common. Being the acronym for Dive Massively Multiplayer Online Role Playing Game, it described an interactive game where one was able to play in a virtual world like it was real life, by connecting a dedicated console to the neuron nano-interface, an intracerebral nano-computer network composed from the quintessence of cyber- and nanotechnology.

It was as though you entered the game for real. Amidst a myriad of DMMORPGs that were developed, there was one title that shined brilliantly. Yggdrasil. It was a game that a highly-regarded Japanese developer released twelve years ago in the year 2126. No matter which DMMORPG it was compared to, Yggdrasil was a game that offered an immensely high level of freedom to the players.

The number of classes that formed the basis of the game easily topped 2000 when you added up the normal and high-end classes. All classes had a maximum level of 15, meaning a player had to have at least 7 classes or more to reach the overall level cap of 100. Furthermore, you were able to just have a taste of various classes as long as you satisfied this overall condition.

Although it was inefficient, it was possible to have 100 level one professions if you wanted. In other words, it was a system where it was impossible to have completely identical characters unless you intentionally made them so. This level of freedom also applied to the visuals. If you used creator tools that were sold separately, you were able to alter appearances of weapons and armor, interior data, character visuals, and detailed settings of a player's home.

What awaited the players who set off for adventures in such a world was a colossal map. Nine home worlds consisting of Asgard, Alfheim, Vanaheim, Nidavellir, Midgard, Jotunheim, Niflheim, Helheim, and Muspelheim. A vast world, innumerable classes, and fully customizable visuals. It had ignited the artisan spirits of the Japanese players and caused a phenomenon that would later be called 'visual popularity'. With such explosive popularity behind it, it had reached a level of acclaim where Yggdrasil and DMMORPG were considered as one and the same in Japan. Alas, that was a story of a generation past.

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A grand round table of obsidian luster was in the center of the guildhall, surrounded by 41 luxurious seats. But most of them were vacant. Only two silhouettes were visible now where all the members once used to sit. One wore an elaborate, jet-black academic gown adorned with gold and violet edges. The decoration around its neck seemed somewhat excessive, but strangely, it was rather fitting. However, the head that should have been sitting above the lavish collar was nothing more than a skull, devoid of skin and flesh. There was a dark red glow inside the empty eye sockets, and a dark halo-like object glimmered behind its head.

The other individual sitting in another seat was not a human, either. It was a lump of black goo. Its surface, reminiscent of coal tar, quivered and never maintained a consistent shape even for a second. The former was an Overlord that ranked top even among the Elder Liches. Magic casters who had turned into the undead in the pursuit of ultimate magic. The latter was an Elder Black Ooze, a race with powerful acidic abilities that was close to the strongest among the slime types. Yet, they were not monsters. They were player characters.

The selectable races in Yggdrasil were divided into three diverse categories: classic, humanoid races such as humans, dwarves and elves; demi-human races with hideous appearances such as goblins, orcs, and ogres, favored for their physical prowess; and the heteromorphic races who possessed monster abilities and higher stats than any other races, but were given restrictions in various aspects.

If you include the high-tier races for these three, the number of all the races reached a total of 700. Of course, Overlord and Elder Black Ooze were one of the high-tier heteromorphic races that players were able to pick. Between those two people, the Overlord talked without its mouth moving. Despite being the previous generation's top DMMORPG, it was technologically impossible to change expressions to go with the conversation.

"Wow, it's been a really long time, 'Herohero'-sama. Even though it's the last day for Yggdrasil, I honestly didn't expect anyone to actually show up."

"I agree. It's been so long, 'Momonga'-sama." The Elder Black Ooze replied with a voice of an adult male, but in comparison to the Overlord, there was no trace of what could be called vigor or liveliness.

"This is the first time since you changed your job in real life, so how long has it been? Hasn't it been like two years?"

"Ah… That seems about right. Wow~ it's been that long already… Oh boy, my sense of time is out of whack because I've been doing nightly overtime shifts everyday lately."

"Isn't that a really dangerous sign? Are you okay?"

"Physically? I'm in complete rags. It's not so much as to visit a doctor, but I'm almost on the verge of it. I seriously want to run away. Still, I have to earn money to make ends meet, so I'm working for my dear life while being whipped like a slave."

"Wow…" The Overlord Momonga tilted his head back and made an irritated gesture.

"Really, it's unbearable." Herohero's gloomy voice, laden with an incredible sense of reality, flew towards Momonga as if to inflict a follow-up strike. His complaint in regards to work in the real world accelerated further. Stories about impudent subordinates, plans that were completely altered overnight, criticism from his superior for failing to meet his quota, days pulling all-nighters due to shitloads of work, abnormal weight increase from his ruined biorhythm, the growing number of drugs with each passing day.

Eventually, the conversation turned one-sided as Herohero's gripe burst out like a broken dam. There are a lot of people who avoid talking about reality in the virtual world. The feeling of not wanting to drag the real world into the virtual world was understandable.

However, the two people here did not think that way. The guild, a team formed, organized and operated by an assembly of players, that they belonged to, Ainz Ooal Gown, had two rules for joining. First, you have to be a member of society. Secondly, you had to be of a heteromorphic race.

Due to the nature of the guild, there were many cases where complaints about work in real life became the topic, and this was accepted by the guild members. It could be said the conversation these two were having was an everyday scene in Ainz Ooal Gown. After a good amount of time had passed, the words of grievance from Herohero's mouth came to a halt.

"…I'm sorry for my endless complaining. I don't get much chance to vent on the other side." Herohero wiggled what appeared to be its head as if to bow. In response to this, Momonga quickly replied. "It is okay, Herohero-sama. I was the one who asked you to come, even though you were exhausted." Compared to earlier, a faint laughter with a bit more vigor was heard from Herohero. "Thank you very much, Momonga-sama. I'm glad that I logged in and got to meet up."

"I'm glad to hear you say that."

"…But I'm afraid it's about time for me to…" Herohero's tentacle moved in the air as if it was touching something. He was operating his console.

"Ah, you're right. It's gotten very late."

"I'm sorry, Momonga-sama." Momonga sighed softly to conceal the emotions that had risen inside him. "I see. That's a shame… Honestly, fun times fly by so fast."

"I really want to be with you until the end, but I'm exhausted."

"You must be worn out. Please, do log out and get some rest."

"I'm really sorry. Momon- no, Guildmaster, what will you do?"

"I'm planning to stay online until I'm disconnected when the service ends. There's still time… Who knows, another person might show up."

"Is that so? Frankly, I didn't expect this place to still exist."

At this sort of moment, it was truly a good thing that it was impossible to change facial expressions. Because if there was, one would have seen his grimace in a single glance. Momonga closed his mouth shut to suppress the sudden surge of emotions, since they would be revealed in his voice.

He had desperately maintained the guild because they had created it together, so it was only natural for him to be overwhelmed with indescribable sentiments when such words were spoken by one of his comrades. But those sentiments were dispelled by what Herohero said next.

"As the Guildmaster, you have kept this place going so that we could return any time. Thank you."

"…We all created this place together. It's the duty of the guildmaster to maintain and supervise it so that anyone can come back whenever!"

"It was thanks to your presence that we were able to enjoy this game to the fullest… Next time we meet, it would sure be nice if it was in Yggdrasil II."

"I've yet to hear a rumor about a sequel… But I really hope that happens."

"Let's meet again when that time comes! Well then, I'm feeling really, really sleepy now, so I'll log out… I'm glad I got to meet you before the end. Have a good game."

"…" For a moment, Momonga was left speechless; however, he gave his final words right away. "I also had a good time thanks to you. Have a good game." A smiling emoticon appeared above Herohero's head with a glint. Since there was no ability to change facial expression in Yggdrasil, players utilized emoticons to express their emotions. Momonga operated his console and selected the same emoticon. Then, Herohero's final words were heard.

"Let's meet again in a different place." The last one of the three guild members who showed up today vanished. Erasing all trace of the visitor, the silence returned to the guildhall. A silence devoid of memories and emotions. Looking at the chair that Herohero was sitting in just a few seconds ago, Momonga spat out the words he was going to say at the end. "While I understand that you're tired, since today's the last day for the game and you're already here, can't you stay until the very end?" Of course, there was no reply. Herohero had already logged out to the real world. *Haah…* Momonga let out a sigh deep down from of his heart. He could not bring himself to say those words.

The fact that Herohero was always tired was sufficiently evident by the mood from their brief conversation. But Herohero saw the mail that he sent and showed up today, for the final day in Yggdrasil. He should be thankful for that alone. Wanting more than this would go beyond being shameless to being a nuisance. Momonga stared at the seat where Herohero was until a while ago, and then he looked around. What he saw were the 39 chairs where his old comrades used to sit. After the quick look around, his eyes returned to Herohero's seat once again.

"Let's meet again in a different place…"

Let's meet again someday.

See you again.

He had heard such phrases time after time. But the instance of them actually keeping their words almost never happened. Nobody had returned to Yggdrasil. "Just where and when are we meeting again…" Momonga's shoulders shook greatly. Then his true feelings that he had bottled up for a long time burst forth.

"Don't joke with me!" With a furious shout, he slammed his hands on the table. Having judged the action as an attack, the system calculated countless variables such as Momonga's barehanded damage and the table's structural defense, and displayed its result where Momonga hit with the number "0".

“This place is the Great Tomb of Nazarick that we all built together! How can everyone give it up that easily?!” What followed after his fierce fury was desolation. “…No, that’s not it. They didn’t give it up. They simply faced the choice between “reality” and “fantasy” head-on. Ah, it couldn’t be helped, and there were no betrayals. It must’ve been a difficult choice for them…” Momonga muttered as though persuading himself and stood up from his seat.

He walked towards the wall with a single staff hanging on it. Having the Greek god Hermes’s caduceus as its motif, the staff was entwined by seven serpents. Each of the squirming serpents’ mouths held a jewel of a different color. Its grip had a transparent, crystal like quality, and was emitting a bluish white light. The staff of supreme quality was a ‘guild weapon’ that each guild can possess only one of, and it was an item that could be said to be the symbol of Ainz Ooal Gown.

Originally, a guildmaster was supposed to carry it with them, so why was it hanging on the wall in the room as a decoration? That was because it was an existence that symbolized the guild. The destruction of a guild weapon signified the dissolution of the guild. That was why guild weapons were stored in the most secure location in many cases, with their powerful abilities never seeing the light of day. Even a prominent guild like Ainz Ooal Gown was no exception. For such a reason, the staff had never been handed to Momonga despite it being custom-made for him, and instead was adorned on the wall.

Momonga reached out his hand for the staff, but he stopped halfway. At this very moment, even though Yggdrasil’s service shutdown was near, he felt hesitation towards the act of debasing the glorious memories that they had made together. The days they spent together adventuring repeatedly in order to create the guild weapon. Those good old times of dividing up into teams and gathering materials as though it were a contest, arguing over what its appearance should be like, and combining everyone’s suggested idea and making it little by little. They were the heydays of Ainz Ooal Gown, the times where they were most glorious.

There was a person who went as far as to strain his overworked body to show up. There was even a person who showed up after having a big fight with his wife due to him neglecting time with his family. There was also a person who laughed saying he took paid leave. There were times where they spent the whole day chattering, getting worked up over idle stories. There were days where they planned their adventures and swept up the treasures. There were times where they went on raids and captured hostile guilds’ castles. There were days when they destroyed every hidden boss monster that they could find. They had found countless undiscovered resources. They had placed various monsters in their base and cleared out invading players.

But now there was no one. 37 out of 41 people had quit, and though the remaining three remained as guild members in name, Momonga could not recall the last time that they’d shown up with the exception of today. Momonga opened the console and accessed the official data, where he searched for the guild’s ranking. At one point they had stood at rank 9 out of a little over 800 guilds, but now they had dropped to 29th.

Still, this wasn’t so bad in comparison to rank 48 when they were at their lowest. The reason why the guild was able to maintain its rank was not due to Momonga’s exploits, but thanks to the items left behind by his old comrades, the relics of the past. Although it was very much a guild in ruins now, there was a time where it shined.

The fruit of those times. Their guild weapon: The Staff of Ainz Ooal Gown. Momonga did not wish to drag the weapon filled with their glorious memories into this time of ruins; however, a contrary feeling was ablaze inside of him. All this time, Momonga had placed importance on majority vote. Although he was in the position of a Guildmaster, what he actually did was miscellaneous work like contacting people. That was why, in this moment with nobody around, the thought of wanting to use his authority as the guildmaster crossed his mind for the first time.

"This outfit doesn't have enough class." Muttering to himself, Momonga operated his console to equip his avatar with armaments befitting his position as a prominent Guildmaster. Armaments in Yggdrasil were classified according to their data size. The greater the data, the higher the class of the weapon. Starting from the bottom, the classes were: Lesser, Minor, Medium, Major, Greater, Legacy, Relic, and Legendary. But right now, Momonga was armed to the teeth in the highest class of them all, Divine.

On his fleshless fingers were nine rings, each imbued with different powers. Furthermore, his necklace, gauntlet, boots, cloak, and circlet were all Divine class. Just their prices alone, every one of them were masterpieces of tremendous worth. A brilliant gown hung from the shoulder pieces, and a rippling dark red aura rose from his feet.

Although the aura was turbulent and sinister, it was not Momonga's skill. He had simply embedded a 'Chaotic Aura' effect into the robe since there was some space left over in its visual data capacity. Touching it was perfectly harmless. Numerous icons popped up in the corner of Momonga's field of vision, indicating that his abilities have increased.

Having changed his gear and armed himself from top to toe, Momonga nodded in satisfaction with his current equipment befitting of Guildmaster. Then he reached out his hand and grabbed the Staff of Ainz Ooal Gown. The moment he held the staff in his hand, it spewed out a vortex of dark red aura. Sometimes it formed the face of a human in agony and crumbled away. It was so vivid that it felt as though you could hear their voices of pain. "…Sick details."

The supreme staff that he had never held even once after its completion finally fell into the hands of its original owner with the end of Yggdrasil's online service ahead of him. Verifying the icons indicating dramatic increases in his stat again, he also felt a slight loneliness. "Should we get going, symbol of our guild? No, that's not it, let us go, symbol of our guild."

Part 2

Momonga left the room named the Round Table. Any guild member wearing the guild ring would automatically log into this room unless there were special circumstances. If there were any other members coming back, they would definitely appear here.

However, Momonga knew well that the other members would no longer return here. During the last moments of the Great Tomb of Nazarick, only Momonga was left. Repressing his turbulent emotions, Momonga silently entered a vast foyer. A world of grandeur and brilliance, reminiscent of a giant castle clad in marble.

Suspended from the high ceiling, evenly placed chandeliers could be seen emitting a soft, warm glow. The smooth floor of the wide corridor reflected the lights from the chandeliers above,

shining luminously like a mosaic of bright stars. If the doors along the corridor were opened, the luxurious furniture inside the rooms would attract the eyes of many.

If players who had heard the name Nazarick came here, they would have been stunned for sure by the fact that such beautiful sights existed in a place known for its infamy. After all, the Great Tomb of Nazarick overcame the largest player organized military offensive in the server's history.

An alliance of eight guilds, guild affiliates, mercenary players and NPC mercenaries, numbering a total of fifteen hundred people, tried to raid this place and were annihilated. That event turned this location into a legend.

The Great Tomb of Nazarick used to have only 6 floors, but it underwent a major reconstruction after being occupied by Ainz Ooal Gown. Now it stretched over 10 floors, each with its own characteristics.

Floor 1~3: Catacombs

Floor 4: Underground Lake

Floor 5: Glacier

Floor 6: Jungle

Floor 7: Underground Volcano

Floor 8: Wilderness

Floor 9: Royal Suite

Floor 10: Throne Room

The last two floors were the base of Ainz Ooal Gown, one of the top 10 guilds in Yggdrasil. Momonga's footsteps echoed in the Royal Suite's passage, followed by the tapping of his staff. After a few turns around the corners of the wide hallway, Momonga saw a woman in the distance moving towards him.

She had a luscious blonde hair down to her shoulders and well-defined features. She was wearing a maid outfit, including a large apron and a long skirt. At a height of about 170 centimeters, she had a slender body with a full chest threatening to spill out of her clothes. Overall, she gave a virtuous and elegant impression. As the two of them approached each other, the maid stepped aside and bowed deeply to Momonga. In response, he slightly raised his hand.

The maid's expression did not change; her face was showing the exact same unsmiling face as before. Facial expressions did not change in Yggdrasil. However, there was a difference between the unchanging expressions of players and this maid. The maid was a Non-Player Character (NPC). Within the game, these artificial intelligences only move according to their program. In other words, they were the same as moving mannequins, and even its bow to Momonga was just a pre-programmed action.

His greeting earlier could be seen as a waste of time, but Momonga had a reason why he didn't treat them with disrespect. All 41 maid NPCs working in the Great Tomb of Nazarick were based on different illustrations by a guild member, who had lived off from his artwork and was now a manga artist serialized in a monthly manga magazine. Momonga gazed not just at the maid's appearance, but also at her astonishingly elaborate uniform. Especially, the exquisite embroidery on the apron was the subject of admiration.

Since it was illustrated by a person who boasted that *"a maid's best weapon is her uniform"*, the level of detail on the outfit was far beyond normal. Momonga couldn't help feeling nostalgic when he recalled how the guild member who was responsible for her visual rendering would start to scream at the task.

"Ah… Right. Since then, he was always saying things like *"Maid uniforms are justice!"* … Speaking of which, the heroine of the manga that he's drawing now is also a maid. Are you still making your assistants cry with your excessive attention to detail, Whitebrim-san?"

As for its behavioral program, it was created by Herohero-san and five other programmers. In other words, this maid was created from the hard work and joint efforts of the past guild members, so ignoring her was a little out of the question since, like the Staff of Ainz Ooal Gown, she was also a part of his precious memories.

As Momonga was thinking about these things, the maid tilted her head as if to ask what the matter is. As long as someone was close to her for a certain period of time, the maid automatically adopted this position. Recollecting his memories, Momonga was amazed by Herohero's meticulous attention to detail.

There should be a few other hidden positions programmed in as well. Although he wanted to see all her postures, there wasn't much time left. Momonga's eyes turned to the semi-spherical holographic clock displayed on his left wrist and confirmed the current time. Indeed, there was no time to idle around.

"Thank you for your hard work." Momonga said this phrase of farewell filled with many sentiments and walked past the maid. Of course, the other side did not respond. Nevertheless, Momonga believed that a farewell was in order since it was the last day. Leaving the maid behind, Momonga moved on.

Before long, a giant staircase with a luxurious red carpet covering the middle appeared before him. Momonga slowly walked down the flight of stairs and reached the tenth floor, the lowermost floor in the Great Tomb of Nazarick. The place he arrived at was a wide, open lobby with a few servants waiting for him.

The first servant to catch his attention was an elderly butler dressed gracefully in his traditional uniform. His hair was entirely white, just like his immaculate beard. But the old man's back was straight as an arrow and strong as a steel sword. He had visible wrinkles on his hollow face, which made him seen gentle in appearance, but his eyes were as sharp as an eagle after its prey.

Following behind the butler like shadows were six maids. However, their equipment was completely different than what the earlier maid had. Their hands and feet were covered in

gauntlets and greaves decorated with gold, silver and black metals. Donned in armors with a maid uniform motif, they wore white headdresses instead of helmets.

Each maid was holding a different type of weapon, establishing the image of a maid warrior. Their hairstyles were also quite different from each other: buns, ponytail, straight hair, braids, curls, French twist, etc. But something they all had in common was their transcendent beauty. Additionally, the maids were divided into types such as flirty, sporty, traditional and other personalities. Although they were NPCs and their designer had made them all playful and unique, their main purpose was to fight intruders.

In Yggdrasil, guilds in possession of a base equivalent to a castle or greater were given several special benefits. One of these benefits were NPCs that guarded the base. The undead monsters in the Great Tomb of Nazarick fell under this category. These so called 'spawn NPCs' had a level cap of 30 and respawned automatically at no cost after a fixed period of time, but since it wasn't possible to change their appearances and AI programming, they did not pose much of a threat against other intruding players.

On the other hand, another special benefit was the power to create an original NPC. When a guild takes over a base with a castle-level rank, they could create NPCs with a collective maximum level of 700. Since the highest level was 100, you could create a maximum of five level 100 and four level 50 NPCs as an example. When creating an original NPC, in addition to their appearance and AI, it was even possible to change their armors and weapons.

This allowed a guild to create far stronger NPCs and assign them to guard key locations. There was no need to create these NPCs with combat in mind. Another guild who occupied a castle, the Great Cat Kingdom, turned all their NPCs into cats or other feline creatures. It could be said a guild was given the exclusive right to create the image and atmosphere of their castle.

“Hmm.” Looking at the butler and the maids bowed down before him, he brought his hand to his chin while. Since he had always used teleport to move from room to room, Momonga didn't come here very often, which caused him to look at them somewhat nostalgically. Momonga's hand operated the console, opened a page that was only accessible to guild members and activated one of the options. As he did, the names of the servants appeared above their heads.

“Ah, so that's his name.” Momonga had forgotten this name. He made a bitter yet nostalgic smile as he recalled the disputes he had with his companions over deciding the name for this NPC. Sebas, the butler, also served as the house steward. The six maids next to Sebas were under his direct command; the combat maid unit called the ‘Pleiades’.

In addition to them, Sebas had several manservants and assistant butlers under his supervision. The text log had a more detailed setting, but Momonga wasn't in the mood to take a closer look. There was little time left until the server's shutdown, and he wanted to sit down somewhere else. All NPCs (including the maids) contained intricate details since there had been plenty of guild members who were fond of elaborate settings.

Thanks to the fact that there were many illustrators, graphic designers and programmers in Ainz Ooal Gown, they were able to obsess over the visuals and go all out. Originally, Sebas and the maids were the last line of defense against intruders. However, because they were unlikely able to

stand against enemy players who managed to come this far, their only real purpose was to buy some time.

But since no invaders were ever able to reach this point, they had never received orders and had been just waiting endlessly in this place. Gripping his staff, Momonga felt pity towards these NPCs, even though that kind of thought was foolish. NPCs were simply data and the only reason to believe they had emotions was due to their excellently designed AI. However—

"As the guild master, it's about time I started ordering NPCs around." While ridiculing himself for his arrogant comment, Momonga issued an order: "Follow me." Sebas and the maids respectfully bowed, showing they have accepted the command. The act of moving them from this location meant disregarding what the guild members had in mind at the start.

Ainz Ooal Gown was a guild that emphasized on majority vote. It was forbidden for one person to mess around with what everyone had created together out of stubbornness. But today was the day everything would end. Momonga believed that everyone would forgive him if it was on such a day. Pondering these kinds of things, Momonga led the sound of several footsteps following him.

Eventually they arrived at a massive, dome-shaped hall. A large four-colored crystal embedded in the ceiling was emitting rays of white light. There were seventy-two alcoves in the wall, most of them filled with statues. Every statue imitated the appearance of a devil, and there were sixty-seven of them. This room was called the 'Solomon's Gate', also known as the Lemegeton. It was taken from the title of a famous grimoire.

The statues, modelled after the Seventy-Two Demons of Solomon, were actually golems made from rare magical metals. The reason why there were only sixty-seven golems instead of the original seventy-two was because the creator got sick and tired of the project partway.

The four colored crystal set into the ceiling was in fact a monster. If an enemy invaded this place, it would summon high-tier elementals of earth, water, fire and wind, and launch a bombardment of offensive wide-area magic's. Combining everything, it had the firepower to easily eliminate two full parties, which was 12 people, of level 100 players. Indeed, this room was the last line of defense that protected the heart of Nazarick.

Momonga walked across the Lemegeton with the servants and arrived in front of a great gate on the other side. Towering over five meters, this majestic double door was meticulously engraved with a goddess on the left panel and a devil on the right panel. The engraving was so vivid that it felt they would jump out of the door and start attacking. Although it seemed like they could move, Momonga knew they weren't actually able to.

"If they make it to this point, let us give the heroes a grand welcome. There's a lot of players saying we're evil and whatnot, so why not wait for them majestically inside like final bosses?" It was because this proposal had been approved with a majority vote. And the proposer was… "Ulbert-san…" Among all the guild members, Ulbert Alain Odle was a person who fixated on the word 'evil' the most. "Well, he suffered from chuunibiyou, after all…"

Taking a look around the hall, that was quite evident to Momonga. "…These statues won't attack me, right?" His words were full of anxiety and he was right to be so. Even Momonga didn't completely grasp all the inner workings of this maze. It wouldn't be a surprise if some members

left behind something strange as a retirement gift. The person who designed this door was that kind of person.

There was this one time where they activated a powerful golem made by that person, and it turned out that its combat AI was bugged, causing it to suddenly attack everything around it. However, Momonga remained skeptical and believed the 'error' had been intentional.

"Luci★Fer-san, if something like that happens today, of all days, I'll get really angry…" Momonga carefully touched the door, but his worries had been groundless. Befitting of its grandeur, the door opened slowly as though it was automatic. The atmosphere suddenly changed. The ambiance until now had resembled a shrine with its tranquility and solemnity, but the sight in front of him surpassed even that. It felt like as if the change in ambiance was overwhelming him.

Its interior was enormous: a space wide enough to fit hundreds of people with room to spare, and ceiling so high that you had to look all the way up. The walls were white, adorned with a variety of golden embellishments. Hanging from the ceiling, rows of opulent chandeliers crafted from rainbow-colored gems gave off a fantastical brilliance. From the ceiling to the floor, a total of forty-one giant banners with different patterns decorated the walls.

There was a low stairway that had about ten steps at the innermost area of the room, lavished with gold and silver, and at the top stood a majestic throne that seemed as though it was cut from a gigantic crystal. On the wall behind it was a huge dark red banner embroidered with the guild's coat of arms. This was the Great Tomb of Nazarick's deepest and most important place, the Throne Room.

"Ooh…" Even Momonga was in awe with the magnitude of the room. He was convinced that its scale was probably ranked first or second in Yggdrasil. This room was the perfect place to face the final moments. Momonga stepped into the hall; it was so vast that it felt it would swallow every sound of his footstep, and then he turned his eyes to the female NPC standing next to the throne. Clothed in a pure white dress, she was a beautiful woman with the face of a goddess. In contrast to her dress, she had a lustrous jet-black hair flowing down to her waist. Although her golden irises and vertically split pupils were peculiar, she was an impeccable beauty.

However, on her left and right temples were two thick horns protruding crookedly, and on her waist were black angel wings. Perhaps due to the shadow cast by the horns, her goddess-like smile seemed like a mask concealing her true self. She wore a golden spider web necklace that covered her shoulders and chest. Donned in a silky glove, her slender hand was holding a strange object that appeared to be a wand. It was about 45 cm long and, extending from its tip, a black sphere was floating in the air.

Her name Momonga had not forgotten. Her name was Albedo, the Overseer of the Floor Guardians of the Great Tomb of Nazarick. She was a NPC that supervised the seven Floor Guardians, and that meant she ranked above all the other NPCs in the Great Tomb of Nazarick. It was for this reason that she was allowed to stand by in the Throne Room. Momonga looked at Albedo with his sharp eyes and wondered: "I knew she had a World class item before, but how come she has two now?"

In all of Yggdrasil, there were only 200 World class items. Each of them had their own unique ability, and some were powerful enough to destroy the game balance. Of course, not all of the

World class items had such game-breaking abilities. Even so, if a player managed to get hold a World class item, that player's reputation in Yggdrasil would jump to the highest level.

Ainz Ooal Gown had eleven of these items, and it was also the guild with the most World class items in their possession. Compared to other guilds there was quite a gap, since the guild after them only had three. With the approval from his guild members, Momonga possessed one of these ultimate items. The rest were scattered inside Nazarick, the majority of them lying asleep deep inside the treasury under the protection of Avataras.

There was only one explanation as to how Albedo had gotten hold of such secret treasure without Momonga knowing. It had been given to her by the guild member who created her. Ainz Ooal Gown was a guild that emphasized on majority vote. It was forbidden for one person to move the treasures that everyone had gathered together as one pleased.

Along with a slight displeasure, Momonga thought about taking it back. But today was the last day, and after taking into account how much Albedo was treasured by his companion, he decided to ignore the issue.

“Stop there.” Having arrived at the stairs leading to the throne, Momonga solemnly ordered Sebas and the Pleiades to stop following him. As soon as he started to climb a few steps, he noticed the footsteps still following behind him. Momonga couldn't help but to smile bitterly… Of course, the expression on his skull did not change at all. NPCs didn't understand any commands outside of their original programming. You had to use a specific words in order for them to accept the command. Having forgotten about it, Momonga realized that he had not ordered NPCs around in a long time.

After his guild members left, Momonga hunted alone and gathered funds to maintain Nazarick. He didn't build any friendships with other players, even going as far as to avoid them. He also avoided the dangerous areas his guild members used to frequent. Day after day, he was constantly earning money and putting it into the treasury until he logged out. There was almost no contact with the NPCs.

“Standby.” The footsteps stopped. After Momonga gave the correct command, he climbed the final steps in front of him to the throne. Momonga gazed unreservedly at Albedo who standing next to him. He rarely visited this room in the past, so he never paid any special attention to her before.

“I wonder what kind of setting she has.” The only thing Momonga remembered about Albedo was her role as the Overseer of the Floor Guardians and that she was the highest ranking NPC in the Great Tomb of Nazarick. Struck by curiosity, Momonga operated his console and perused Albedo's detailed setting. A dense array of text flooded his vision. Its length was equivalent of an epic poem. It seemed like reading it all slowly would take him past the server shutdown.

With the feeling of having stepped on a landmine, Momonga's unmoving face started to tremble. Deep in his heart he wanted to scold himself for forgetting that the member who designed Albedo was an extremely meticulous person. But since he already started reading, he decided to see it through to the end.

Paying no attention to the actual content, he skimmed the walls of text in a flash. After skipping past all the lengthy texts, Momonga finally reached the last part of her setting. But after reading what was written down, his train of thought came to a sudden stop. *She is also a slut.*

He was at a loss for words. "…Huh? What the hell is this?!" Momonga could not help but to shout. Holding on to his doubts, he read it several times but it was still the same sentence. Even after several moments of pondering the matter, he couldn't think of any other interpretation. "A slut… Meaning she has excessive sexual desire?"

Each of the forty-one guild members had been in charge of the settings for at least one NPC. Was it possible that one of them had decided on such a setting for their own character? Momonga was bewildered. Perhaps he would be able to find a different meaning behind it after carefully reading the entire text. But among his guild members, there were indeed people who would come up with such a distinctive and strange setting. One of those people was 'Tabula Smaragdina', the creator of Albedo.

"Ah, he was crazy about character dissonance, wasn't he? But even so…" *But even so, isn't this going overboard?* Every NPC made by a member was part of the guild's legacy. Momonga felt disheartened about Albedo, who was ranked first among the NPCs, having such a setting. "Hmm…" Was is okay for him to modify a NPC that a guild member had created dearly? After giving it some thought, Momonga came to a conclusion. "Let's change it."

Now that he had the guild weapon in his possession, he was truly the guild master. It should be okay for him exercise his prerogative. Momonga's hesitation vanished with his unreasonable logic that he should fix the errors of his guild members. Momonga stretched out the hand he was holding the staff with. Normally he would have to use the editing tool to change a setting, but because right now he was using his guild master privileges, he was able to access it directly.

Operating his console, he erased the sentence immediately. "That's good for now." While looking at the empty space in Albedo's setting, Momonga thought for a moment. *Maybe I should put something in…* "No, that's just silly." Laughing at the idea that popped up in his mind, he typed on the console's keypad. It was a single sentence: *She is also in love with Momonga.*

"Wow, that's cringe worthy." Hiding his face behind his hands, Momonga felt extremely embarrassed about his action. It was like programming his ideal girlfriend complete with a love plot. Although he wanted to rewrite it at first, he decided to go with it. Today the game will end and the feeling of embarrassment will soon fade away. In the end, the part he deleted and added were about the same length. If there were some blank parts left over, Momonga would've felt bad about it.

Sitting on the throne, embarrassed and somewhat satisfied, Momonga looked around the room and noticed that Sebas and the maids were standing motionless. Even though they were together in the same place, it still felt a little desolate. *I think there was a command like this.*

Momonga remembered a command he never used in the past. He held out his hand and slowly moved it down. "Kneel." Albedo, Sebas and the Pleiades genuflected simultaneously. *Everything is set.* Momonga raised his left hand to look at the holographic clock.

23:55:48

Just in time for the last moments. A GM probably had already begun broadcasting and shooting fireworks outside. But sitting inside here reminiscing, completely isolated from the outside world, Momonga had no way of knowing. Momonga leaned back on the throne and slowly looked up at the ceiling.

Considering how this was the legendary base that had destroyed the great expedition force in the past, Momonga thought that maybe there were some players who might try to invade Nazarick on the final day. He was waiting. To accept the last challenge as the Guildmaster.

Although he had sent emails to his old companions, almost none of them showed up. He was waiting. To welcome his companions one last time as the Guildmaster. *Now we are a relic of the past…* Momonga thought inside his heart. The guild was now an empty shell, but he still had a great time in the long run. His eyes looked at the huge banners hanging from the ceiling. Their total was forty-one. One banner for every guild member, each with its own design.

Momonga lifted his fleshless finger and pointed at one of the banners. “Me.” Then he moved his finger towards the banner next to it. That one belonged to one of Ainz Ooal Gown's… No, to one of Yggdrasil's strongest players. The guild's founder and the one who once brought together the ‘First Nine’. “Touch Me.” Next he pointed at the banner of the person who was a university professor in the real world, and also the oldest person in Ainz Ooal Gown. “Shijuuten Suzaku.” His finger moved faster and faster, pointing out the banner that belonged to one of Ainz Ooal Gown's three female members. “Azuki Mochi.”

Momonga smoothly recited the names of the banners' owners. “Herohero, Peroroncino, Bukubuku Chagama, Tabula Smaragdina, Takemikazuchi, Variable Talisman, Genjiro—“ Remembering the names of his 40 companions wasn't very difficult for Momonga. The names of his friends were still deeply imprinted into his mind. Momonga tiredly leaned his back on the throne. “Yeah, it was really fun…”

On top of the monthly fees, Momonga spent almost one-third of his monthly salary on cash purchases. It wasn't like his income was especially high, it was just that he didn't have any other interests, so he spent most of his money on Yggdrasil. The game had a system where players could pay a fee in order to participate in a lottery to win a rare item, and Momonga had spent most of his money on this. After many expenses, he managed to get many different rarities.

But after hearing that one of his guild members managed to win the lottery using only his lunch money, Momonga was green with envy. Since every member of Ainz Ooal Gown was a working member of society, everyone had spent money on cash purchases, but Momonga was in a league of his own. He was addicted to it that much. Going on adventures was interesting, but freely roaming about with his friends was the most fun out of all. For Momonga who had no friends or remaining family in the real world, his memories of the time he spent with his friends in Ainz Ooal Gown were all he had. Today, that guild would disappear.

With a heart full of dismay and regret, he clenched the hand holding the staff. Momonga was just a normal person, he didn't have any financial power or connections that could change this fact. He could only wait silently as time ran out for all the players on the server.

The holographic clock read 23:57. The server was ending at 0:00. *Time is running out. This virtual world will end and I will return to my everyday life. This is obvious. People cannot live in a virtual world,*

so everyone will have to leave sooner or later. Tomorrow I'll have to get up at 4am. I need to go to sleep immediately after the server shutdown, so that it won't affect my work tomorrow.

23:59:35,

36,

37…

Momonga slowly counted the seconds.

23:59:48,

49,

50…

Momonga shut his eyes.

23:59:58,

59—

With the clock counting the remaining seconds, he waited for the end of this fantasy world… And the eventual forced logout…

0:00:00…

1,

2,

3…

"…Huh?" Momonga opened his eyes. He was not back in his familiar room. He was still sitting in the Throne Room within Yggdrasil. "What's going on?" The time was correct. Right now he should be forcefully logged out from the server shutdown.

0:00:38

It was already past the announced time and unless there was a system error, it was impossible to get it wrong. Momonga looked around confusedly, searching for an explanation. "Did they delay the shutdown? Or did they decide to postpone the end the end because they were unable to shut the server down?"

Various explanations came to his mind, but none of them seemed to be the correct answer. The most probable explanation appeared to be a delayed server shutdown due to an error in the system. If that were the case, a GM should've made a statement by now. Momonga hurriedly tried to find any news on the shutdown in the chat channel, but stopped abruptly. There was no control interface.

“What the…?” Although Momonga felt anxious and confused, he was also a little surprised by his own calmness. He tried all the functions used in the game: ‘Forced System Access’, ‘Chat’, ‘Call GM’, ‘Log Out’ and so on. Nothing was working, it felt as if he was completely removed from the system.

“… What the hell is happening here?!” His angry shout echoed in the Throne Room and then faded away. For such a thing to happen on the last day, when everything was supposed to end… Were the developers actually tricking everyone? Momonga's voice was furious and he felt frustrated from being unable to meet a glorious end. Usually, there should have been no response to his furious exclamation. However…

“Is everything all right, Momonga-sama?” It was the first time Momonga ever heard this sweet female voice. Although shocked, Momonga started looking for the source the voice. When he found out who it was, he was left speechless. The response came from a NPC, it was Albedo.

Part 3

Situated on the border between the Baharuth Empire and the Kingdom of Re-Estize, to the south of the Azellerisia mountains, was a vast forest called ‘The Great Forest of Tob’. On the outskirts of this forest, lay the village of Carne. It had a population of about 120 people, which were divided into 25 families. For a border village of the Kingdom of Re-Estize, this number wasn’t unusual.

The main livelihood of the villagers came from the forest and their crops, since there were almost no visitors except for some pharmacists looking for herbs and the tax collector who came once a year. It was a village frozen in time. The villagers were busy the moment they woke up at sunrise. As a village without a magical light, the ‘Continual Light’, they worked from sunrise until sundown, it was that kind of life.

Enri Emmot’s first task every day would be to go to the nearby well and draw water. Drawing the water was a girl’s job and once the water tank inside her family home was full, her first task of the day would be completed. Around this time, her mother would prepare breakfast, and the family of four would enjoy breakfast together.

Breakfast consisted of boiled wheat barley or wheat porridge, as well as some stir-fried vegetables. Sometimes they would also eat fruits. After dining with her parents, her 10-year-old sister would leave for the forest to pick up fresh firewood, or help out with the fieldwork. In the village center, once the bell rings for noon, everyone will rest in the nearby square to eat lunch together. Lunch consisted of black bread a few days old, along with some minced meat soup. After that they would continue working in the fields and once the sun set everyone returned to their homes to eat dinner.

Like lunch, dinner also consisted of black bread, along with bean soup. If the village hunters managed to catch some animals, there would be some meat as well. After dinner, everyone would use the lights from the kitchen and chat happily, while mending torn clothes. They would go to sleep around 8 o’ clock. Enri Emmot was born 16 years ago, and up to this day she had never left the village. She was wondering, would her days always stay the same? Just like any other day, Enri got out of bed and went to the well to draw water. It usually took her about 3 trips to the well in order to fill up the huge water tank.

"Yosh." Enri rolled up her sleeves and showed off some eye catching white skin that had not been exposed to too much sun. Working in the fields had made her arms slim, but brawny. Even though the filled water jug was heavy, Enri easily picked it up. If the jug was filled to the brim, she would have to make fewer trips, which would make her job a lot faster, right?

But it shouldn't be too heavy for her to pick up. While thinking this way, Enri started to make her way home. On her way back she heard a sound and after turning towards it her heart tensed up with a feeling of dread. The sound she heard was the noise of wood being smashed. Followed by—

"A scream…?" It sounded like the cry of a strangled bird, but it was definitely not a bird who produced these cries. Enri could not help but shudder. She didn't want to believe it. It must have been her imagination that definitely was not the scream of a human. Many horrified thoughts flashed through her mind.

She had to hurry, because the screaming appeared to have come from the direction of her family's home. She threw the water jug aside, since it was impossible for her to run while carrying such a heavy thing. Although she almost tripped over her dress, she quickly regained her balance.

The sound came again. Enri's heart pounded. That was definitely a human screaming, there was no mistake about it. She continued to run, and run and run. Never in her life did she run so fast, she ran until she tripped over her own legs. The sound of a horse, people screaming and shouting.

Everything became clearer and clearer. In front of Enri's eyes, from far away, she could see a stranger in a full suit of armor pointing a drawn sword at the villagers. On the ground was a villager with a fatal stab wound.

"Mr. Morjina…" In such a small village nobody was treated like a stranger, everyone was part of the family. So Enri recognized the slain villager in front of her. Although he was sometimes noisy, he was a good person and didn't deserve to die this way. Thinking about stopping, she bit her lips and continued forward. The short distance for transporting the water now felt like an eternity. The wind brought the sounds of shouting and curses to her ear. Finally, the view of her home entered her eyes.

"Father! Mother! Nemu!" While shouting for her family, Enri opened the door and saw her motionless family with faces full of fear… However, once Enri entered through the door their expressions instantly relaxed, showing their relief. "Enri! You're alright!" Her father, with strong hands from working in the field, clutched onto Enri. "Ahh, Enri…" Her mother warmly hugged her.

"Good, Enri has also come back, now let's escape quickly!" Right now, the situation of the Emmot family is critical. They were worried when Enri did not return home, causing them to miss their chance to escape. They were in imminent danger. But all too soon their fear became bitter reality. The moment they wanted to run away, the silhouette of a person entered the doorway. Standing in the sunlight was a person armored in a full suit of armor bearing the crest of the Baharuth Empire.

In his hand he was holding the scabbard of a sword. The Baharuth Empire is constantly at war with its neighbor, the Kingdom of Re-Estize. But invasions would only happen near Fortress city

of E-Rantel, they never reached this village before. The quiet life of this village was abruptly stopped.

From the slits in the helmet, was the feeling of cold eyes counting the numbers of Enri's family, Enri felt terrified, looking into his eyes. The knight gripped onto his sword, creaking sounds could be heard from the way he gripped his sword. The moment he was about to enter the house—

"Huargh!"

"Ergh!" Her father rushed at the knight, pushing both of them out the door. "Flee!"

"You!" There was blood flowing down from her father's face, an injury caused by his impact. Both her father and the knight were fighting each other on the ground. The knight was holding down her father's blade, at the same time her father was stopping the knight's sword. Seeing her father bleeding, Enri's mind went blank. She did not know whether to help her father or to quickly flee the area.

"Enri! Nemu!" Her mother's shout brought her back to reality, Enri saw her mother shaking her head with a pained expression. Enri took her sister's hand and ran. Although stricken with guilt and hesitation, she decided to run quickly into the forest. The sound of horses, shouts, clashing metal and the smell of burning.

From every corner of the village, these situations entered Enri's ears, eyes and nose. Exactly where were they coming from? Enri desperately struggled to find out while she ran. To run until the limits of her body, or to hide in the corner of a house. Fear was threatening to take over her body and the strong beatings of her heart was not only caused by her running. As it was, the feeling of a small hand grasping her own gave her the motivation to run. Her sister's life.

Her mother, who was running in front of them, suddenly stopped next to a corner and turned around. She ran back, signaling Enri to run in the other direction. Thinking about why her mother would do such a thing, Enri quickly pursed her lips and stifled the cry she was about to let out. She took her sister's hand and ran, not wanting to stay in this place a moment longer than necessary. Afraid of what she might see in that scene.

♦ ♦ ♦

"Momonga-sama, is there a problem?" Albedo repeated her question. Momonga didn't know how to answer. Because of so many incomprehensible things happened at once, his mind blanked out. "I'm sorry." Momonga could only stand up and stupidly face Albedo. "Is there anything wrong?" Albedo's beautiful face was slowly inspecting Momonga.

A fragrant smell entered his nose. That fragrance brought Momonga's thinking back on track, as he slowly returned to reality. "No… There's… No, nothing." Momonga wasn't the kind of person to use honorifics when talking to dolls. But… After hearing Albedo's question, he unintentionally responded using honorifics.

Because of her actions and speech, there was no way to ignore her human-like behavior. Although Momonga could clearly see how abnormal Albedo behaved, he was still unable to understand what was happening. In a situation like this, all he could do was to try suppressing his overflowing feelings of fear and surprise, but since Momonga was just an ordinary person, he did

not manage to do so. Just as Momonga wanted to start screaming, a certain guild member's memory came to his mind.

"Turmoil is the failure of a country, you must always maintain a level-headed and logical way of thinking. Keep calm, plan ahead, and don't waste your time thinking about insignificant things, Momonga-san." Thinking about this, Momonga calmed own. To the Zhuge Liang of Ainz Ooal Gown — Moe Dress Girl, Momonga expressed his thanks.

"…Did something happen to you?" Albedo's lovely face asked as she stood close, causing Momonga to almost feel the fragrance that she was emitting. Even though he finally managed to calm down, he almost lost it again in that instant. "…The function to call the GM seems to have failed." Towards the puppy eyed Albedo, Momonga could not help but answer the NPC. Never throughout his whole life did Momonga ever have this kind of experience with a member of the opposite sex, especially not one with this kind of atmosphere.

Although he knew that she was just an NPC, considering her human-like expressions and actions, Momonga couldn't help but feel his heart skip a beat. But the constant beatings of his heart were suppressed in order to return to a calm state. Although Momonga was disturbed his sudden palpitations, he remembers these wise words imparted to him by one of his guild members. But is that really the case? Momonga shook his head, now is not the time to think about such matters.

"…Please forgive me for being unable to answer Momonga-sama's question about the GM. Forgive me for being unable to meet your expectations, if there is a situation where I am able to make up for my mistake, I will be happy to oblige. Please give me your next order."

…These two were talking with each other, there was no mistake about it. Noticing this Momonga was too surprised to speak. Impossible. This was definitely impossible. This NPC was able to speak. No, it is possible to use self-automated speech to allow NPCs to speak, because there were many shouts and cheers for players to download. However… Properly conversing with a NPC was something impossible.

Even just now, Sebas was only able to understand simple commands. Then, what could have happened to make this possible? Was it only Albedo who changed? With a wave of his hand, Momonga gave Albedo the order to stand down, which she did with a face full of regret. Momonga then turned his eyes to the heads of the butler and the six maids. "Sebas! Maids!"

"Yes!" Saying with perfect synchronization, they all raised their heads. "Come to the front of the throne."

"Yes, milord." Again, with perfect synchronization, they stood up and walked towards the throne. Once there they knelt down. At that moment, two things became apparent. First, even without saying specific commands, NPCs are able to understand simple orders. Second, Albedo was not the only one able to speak.

At the very least all the NPCs in the throne room were abnormal. As Momonga thought about this, he couldn't shake the feeling there was something strange about Albedo, who was still standing next to him. Wanting to clarify this, Momonga looked at Albedo with a sharp gaze. "Did something happen? Have I done something wrong…?"

"…!" Finally realizing what was wrong, he was unable to make any sound and could only gasp in surprise… A strange feeling comes from changing expressions. Mouths moving, even letting out sound—

"…Could… It be!" Momonga hurriedly put his hand on his mouth and tried making a sound. His mouth was moving. It was common sense in DMMORPG that it was impossible for the mouth to move and speak at the same time. The appearance of facial expressions was basically rooted, and if this was true, then there should still be no facial expressions on this design. Also, Momonga's face was just a skull, with neither a tongue nor a throat. Looking down at his hands, all he saw was a skeletal hand with no skin whatsoever. He didn't even have internal organs or lungs, so how was he able to speak?

"Impossible…" Momonga suddenly felt all his accumulated common sense disintegrating, at the same time he felt uneasy. Repressing the urge to yell out, his heart suddenly went back to being calm. Momonga forcefully hit one of the armrests on the throne, but as he had expected, there was no indication of damage. "…What should I do…? Are there any good ideas…?" With completely no understanding of the current situation, he also started to get angry that there was no one around that could help him.

Then the most important thing to do now is, to look for clues. "…Sebas." Raising his head, Sebas had a sincere expression, feeling like a real life person. Giving him orders should be no problem right? Although I don't know what will happen, are all the NPCs in this grave loyal to me? These are definitely no longer the NPCs that everyone created together. Feeling uneasy with his mind swimming in questions, Momonga suppressed these emotions. In any case, the most suitable candidate for searching was Sebas.

Despite having Albedo next to him, Momonga made up his mind and choose Sebas. While thinking about looking like a high ranking boss ordering his employee, Momonga showed off a superior attitude and commanded: "Leave the Great Tomb and search the surrounding area. If there are any intelligent or friendly beings, invite them back here. Negotiations should go so far as to please the other. The search radius is one kilometer and try to avoid fighting."

"Yes, Momonga-sama. I will do as you command."

In Yggdrasil, it was impossible for NPCs who were created to protect a specific area to leave it. However, right now that has been subverted. No, this matter could only be determined once Sebas actually left the Great Tomb of Nazarick. "…Take a member of Pleiades with you. If there comes a situation where you have to retreat, bring the information gathered back here."

With that, the first step has been taken. Momonga let go of the Staff of Ainz Ooal Gown. The staff did not fall to the ground but started to float, as if there was someone holding it up in the air. Although totally inconsistent with the laws of physics, this is what usually happens in the game. Situations where items floated in the air when let go were not rare in Yggdrasil.

The spirits appearing from the staff showed a pained expression and entangled his hand, which Momonga paid no mind to. This kind of occurrence wasn't very uncommon… However, this kind of effect was not surprising, so Momonga twirled his finger and dissipated the spirits. Momonga folded his arms in contemplation. *The next step would be…*

"…Contacting the game's company." Considering Momonga's abnormal situation, the one would know the most about it should be the game company. The problem was contacting them. Normally one would use the 'Shout' or 'Call GM' functions to establish immediate contact, but that method seemed to have failed at the moment…

"Message?" That was the game's in-game messaging magic. Normally, it was only usable in certain places or situations, but right now it could be put to good use. While this magic could be used to communicate with other players, it was unknown if it could be used to call a GM. And in this abnormal situation, there was no guaranty that magic still worked.

"…But…" It was still worth investigating. Momonga was a pure magician. If he was unable to use magic, not to mention fighting, even his mobility and information gathering capabilities would be significantly reduced. In a situation like this, where everything was unknown, it was important to confirm if magic useable. And it must be found out quickly.

So was there any place where he could use magic, Momonga looked around the throne room and shook his head. Although this was an emergency situation, he didn't want to subject the Throne Chamber to his magical experiments. While thinking about a suitable location, a certain place floated into his mind.

Beside his own abilities, there was another thing he wanted to confirm. And that was his authority. He needed to find out if his authority as leader of Ainz Ooal Gown still existed. Although the NPCs in front of him all appeared to be loyal, there were many NPCs in the Great Tomb of Nazarick who were equally matched with Momonga. He needed to confirm if they were still loyal to him. However—

Momonga looked at the kneeling maids and Sebas, then looked at Albedo at his side. Albedo had a faint smile on her face. While it could be described as very beautiful, it also seemed to be a troubled smile that appeared to be hiding something, which gave Momonga a bad feeling. Was the loyalty of the NPC still unchanged? If this was reality, after…

After meeting an inept superior, the employees would lose faith in him, so the NPC's reactions should be the same, right? Or will they never betray someone as long as they were programmed to be loyal?

If their loyalty could be shaken, then what could be done in order to keep it? Giving them rewards? There were huge amounts of valuables in the guild's treasury. Even if using these treasures would make his past companions sad, since this was an emergency situation regarding the continued survival of Ainz Ooal Gown, they would understand. It was just uncertain how many incentives should be given.

In addition to this, should a higher position be considered as being superior? But right now what power is considered to be superior, this is still unclear to him. It feels like if he went continued further down this maze, he would slowly understand these things. Or…

"Power?" Momonga opened his left hand, and the Staff of Ainz Ooal Gown automatically flew into his hand. "The power to stand above all?" The seven gems embedded in the staff shined brightly, as if asking its master to use its great power. "…Forget it, let's think about this another time."

Momonga let go of the staff and it fell to the floor as if it was angrily throwing a tantrum. To recap, as long as you acted like a leader it was unlikely that others would act hostile towards you. Regardless of whether it's a human or an animal, as long as you didn't show any weakness, the enemy wouldn't bare his fangs and attack. With an imposing manner, Momonga loudly shouted: "Pleiades, listen up. Other than the maid following Sebas, the rest of you will go to the 9th floor and protect it against any invasion from the 8th floor."

"Yes, Momonga-sama." The maids beside Sebas respectfully responded, showing their understanding of their orders. "Do so immediately."

"Understood, my Lord!" After giving their response Sebas and the maids bowed towards Momonga, stood up at the same time and left. Once again the huge doors closed. Sebas and the maids disappears on the other side. The fact that they didn't refuse that order was a good sign. Momonga felt as if a huge load fell off his shoulders and looked at the one person who was left with him. That person would be Albedo, who was giving him a smile while asking:

"What would you want me to do next, Momonga-sama?"

"Ah, ehmm… Got it." Momonga rose from his throne, and holding onto his staff with one hand he said: "Come to me."

"As you wish." Replying with a smile, Albedo came forward. Although Momonga was still wary of the wand with the black floating ball that Albedo was carrying, he momentarily forgot that it was still there. Before he realized this, Albedo was already close enough to hug him.

What a nice smell… What the hell am I thinking?! That thought was instantly dismissed the moment Momonga thought about it, this wasn't the time for fantasies after all. Momonga reached out to touch Albedo's hand. "…"

"Ah?" Albedo expression flinched with pain. Momonga felt shocked and quickly pulled his hand back. What happened? It cannot be that I made her feel uncomfortable? Several unhappy memories floated into his mind, as if the heavens dropped down, but Momonga quickly found the answer.

"…Ah—" One class requirement for becoming an Undead Overlord was the Skeleton Mage, which had a skill that dealt damage or gave negative effects when the user touches another person. Could this be the reason for her reaction? Even if that was the case, there was still some doubt. In Yggdrasil, the monsters and NPCs that spawned in the Great Tomb of Nazarick were all registered under the guild Ainz Ooal Gown.

As long as they were from the same guild, even if they were to attack each other, nothing should happen. Could it be she no longer belonged to the guild? Or was it now possible to harm other guild members? The possibility of it being the latter was high. Realizing this Momonga apologized to Albedo: "I'm sorry. I forgot to lift the negative effect of this skill."

"Please do not mind me, Momonga-sama. This degree of hurt is not painful at all. Also, if it is Momonga-sama, no matter what kind of pain… Ahn!"

"Oh… Ehh… Is that so… No, I am still very sorry."

Momonga had no idea how to react after seeing Albedo shyly covering her face with her hand after letting out a cute, and started to stutter. It really was because of the negative effects on contact. Momonga quickly looked away, and tried to find out how to stop the skill's effects and was suddenly able to understand the method.

Using the skills of the Undead Overlord, to Momonga it was as natural and simple as breathing. Being faced with such an abnormal circumstance, Momonga couldn't help laughing. After so many strange situations, being flustered over something like that was silly. Habits could be really terrifying.

"I'm going to touch you."

"Ah." After deactivating the skill, he reached out to touch Albedo's hand. Although some words floated into his mind, 'Ah how thin', 'Ah how white' and some other ideas popped into his head, all manly desires were completely ignored since he just wanted to feel her pulse.

…It was beating. The beating of a heart. If this was a biological being, this was a given. Of course, if this was a biological being. After letting go, Momonga looked at his own wrist and saw only skinless white bones. Since there were no blood vessels, there was obviously no heartbeat. Of course, being an Undead Overlord meant he was immortal, beyond the reach of death, of course there would no heartbeat.

Moving away, Momonga looked at Albedo. Momonga sees Albedo with moist eyes emerging from his shadow. With a flushed face, probably because of the sudden rise in body temperature. Seen Albedo's appearance, caused Momonga to be stunned. "…How did this happen?" Wasn't she an NPC? Just some electromagnetic information? How she was able to be like a living person, what kind of AI was capable of doing that? More importantly, the world of Yggdrasil appeared to have become the real world…

Impossible. Momonga shook his head in denial. Such a fantastical situation could never happen. But once an idea was deeply entrenched, it couldn't be easily removed. Feeling a little uncomfortable towards Albedo's changes, Momonga was at a loss on what to do next.

Next… Would be the final step. As long as he was able to confirm this, all his premonitions would become fact. To confirm his own suspicion of this being reality or non-reality? Therefore, this was an absolutely necessary action. Even if she decided to use the weapon she holds in her hand…
"Albedo… Can, can I touch your breasts?"

"Huh?" The atmosphere instantly froze. Albedo widened her eyes in surprise. Even Momonga felt embarrassed. Although there was no way to avoid this, he also didn't understand why he was saying this. Really, asking something like that with such a high voice was too vulgar.

No, using his authority as her superior to commit sexual harassment that was the lowest of the low. But being at the end of his wits, he had to do this. Momonga forcefully convinced himself, he mentally stabilized himself and with the dignity of a ruler he said: "It shouldn't matter right?"

Not feeling the least bit dignified. Listening to Momonga's trembling request, Albedo looked like she was about to burst with joy. "Of course, Momonga-sama. Please fondle them at your leisure." Albedo struck out her chest, her well-developed twin peaks, in front of Momonga. If he were able

to swallow his saliva, he would have done so many times already. Reaching out with his hand he touched the breasts covered by the ceremonial robe. There was an abnormal amount of tension and excitement and in the corners of his mind he was calmly observing himself.

Thinking that he was extremely stupid, why would he even think of such a method and put it into action. He sneakily glanced at Albedo and realized her eyes were shining, her chest also had a "Come on!" type of appearance. Unsure whether it was because of his excitement or embarrassment, Momonga's hands were trembling under the pressure, but he resolved himself and extended his hands. Momonga first felt the slightly stiff surface of the dress and then felt a very soft sensation underneath.

"Unn… Anh…" The moment Albedo let out sweet moans, Momonga stopped his experiment. After taking into account everything he knew, Momonga came up with two possible explanations for his situation. First, this could be a new DMMORPG. Meaning that with the end of Yggdrasil, a new Yggdrasil II had been launched.

But after this experiment, the chances of this being a newly released game became non-existent… because a game would prohibit actions rated 18 and above, or even actions rated 15 and above. As soon as there was a violation a severe punishment would be distributed: the names of the offenders would be announced on the official website and the accounts in question would also be deleted.

The reasoning behind these actions was that if the records of these 18 and above actions were made public, it might violate the Social Order Maintenance Act. In general, the fact that this kind of behavior was considered illegal wasn't very surprising. If this was inside a game world, the company would have implemented some kind of method to prevent players from doing these kind of actions. If a GM or the game company was monitoring the game, they would instantly prevent Momonga's lewd behavior. But there appeared to be no sign of that happening here.

And according to the basic DMMORPG and computer laws, in absence of having obtained a license, forcing players staying in a game world is classified as abduction under the abduction law. If players were forced to join the demo of a game, this kind of action would have been instantly spotted by prosecutors, especially if it was impossible to leave the game. It wouldn't be surprising if the game company would be charged of imprisonment.

If such a situation occurred and forced logout failed to work, the players were able to store a whole week's worth of gameplay recording with a built-in program, which was mandatory by law. With that you were able to easily report the company's violations. If Momonga went missing for a week, someone in his company would notice that something was amiss and send someone to his house to look for him. As long as the police investigated the dedicated interface, they should be able to solve this problem.

Just which company will risk getting arrested by committing such a crime? Of course, it was possible to say that this was a first experience to the game, or to say they updated the game. But to a game company, taking this kind of risk would not be advantageous to them at all. Thinking about it this way, then the only possibility for this situation was that this is an act of mischief, with no relation to the game company. If this was so, this line of thought had to change, otherwise it would be impossible to find an answer.

The problem was his confusion about how to approach this problem. There was also another possibility… That the virtual world became reality. Impossible. Momonga immediately rejected this idea. How could such an outrageous thing happen… But on the other hand, the more time passed the more it appeared to be the only explanation of what happened. Also, Momonga thought about the sweet fragrance coming from Albedo.

According to Digital Law, two of the five senses, taste and touch, had to be completely excluded. Although there was a food and drink system in the game, it was generally only there as a consumption system. The restriction on the sense of touch was intended to prevent players from believing this was reality.

Because of these limitations, the usage of virtual reality in the sex industry was not very popular. But now all of these restrictions were gone. This had a dramatic impact on Momonga, causing questions like "What about my work tomorrow?" or "What will happen from now on?" All of these were now minor concerns, to be thrown to the back of his mind.

"…If the virtual world became the real world… Considering the amount of data, this is completely impossible…" Momonga cleared his throat that shouldn't be able to utter a sound. Although his mind could not accept the situation, in his heart he already understood. And his hand finally let go of Albedo's chest.[1]

After fondling them for a prolonged time, Momonga was finally able to understand the situation. The reason he touched her for so long wasn't because he thought that they were extremely soft and didn't want to let go… Definitely not. "I'm sorry, Albedo."

"Woo ah…" Albedo was breathing heavily with a bright red face, with an intensity as it her body was radiating steam. She shyly asked Momonga: "Will I have my first time here?" After Albedo got carried away and asked a question like this, Momonga was unable to suppress a surprised shout: "…Wha—?"

Momonga's mind suddenly blanked out, rendering him unable to decipher the meaning of her sentence. First time? What? What's this about? And why is she looking so shy? "May I ask what I should do about my clothes?"

"…Ha?"

"Should I undress myself? Or would I trouble Momonga-sama? Wearing clothes, later on… They might get dirty… No, if Momonga-sama wants me to wear these clothes, then I have no objections."

His brain finally understood Albedo's words. No, right now it was still questionable if Momonga still had a brain under his skull or not. Becoming aware of what exactly Albedo's intentions were, his heart was wavering: "That's enough, Albedo."

"Huh? Yes, my Lord."

"Now do not… No, now is not the time to do such things."

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[1] Author's Note: While the main character is thinking about his situation, he is still groping the other person's breast.

“I am terribly sorry! We are obviously facing an emergency situation and I was only thinking about my own desires.” Albedo started to kneel in apology, but Momonga reached out to stop her.

“No, all of this is my fault, I’ll forgive you, Albedo. Other than this… I have another request for you.”

“No matter what happens, I will obey.”

“Notify the Floor Guardians, I want them to meet me in the sixth floor’s arena. The time will be one hour from now. I will inform Aura and Mare myself, so you don’t need to contact those two.”

“Yes my lord. I repeat, other than the two Guardians on the sixth floor, inform the rest of the Guardians that they will have to gather in the arena in one hour.”

“Correct, now go.”

“Yes.”

Albedo quickly left the throne room. Watching Albedo's receding back, Momonga heaved a sigh after she left the Throne Room. “…What have I done… Even though it was meant to be a joke… Had I known this earlier I would’ve never done such a thing. I… have tarnished Tabula Smaragdina’s NPC creation.” There could be only one reason for Albedo’s reaction. Back when he rewrote Albedo’s settings, he changed it to ‘Be in love with Momonga’. This was the reason why Albedo had that kind of reaction.

“…Ah… Damn it…!” Momonga muttered to himself, the legacy that was Albedo, which Tabula Smaragdina had painstakingly created from nothing, was modified without permission and thus ended up with this kind of character. Momonga felt he had spoiled somebody else’s masterpiece and became depressed. But Momonga’s face was just a skull, making it impossible to see his distorted face as he left the throne. He told himself to set this problem aside for the time being. He had other problems to deal with right now and that took priority.

第二章 樓層守護者

Chapter 2: Floor Guardians

Part 1

“Heed my call, 「Lemegeton's Demon」.” A golem made of rare minerals moved to obey Momonga’s command. He had finally accepted that the virtual reality had turned into real new world. Now the most important thing was to secure his own safety. Although the NPCs he had encountered so far were respectful towards him, it didn’t necessarily mean that his other encounters would be the same. Better safe than sorry. Momonga had to confirm the functionality of the golems, the World class items and his own magic inside Nazarick… His very survival was at stake.

“Finally, with this the first problem is solved.” Looking at the golem, his mind relaxed at bit. A golem would only obey the commands issued by its master, so even in the worst case scenario, like an NPC rebellion, he would at least have a lifeline. He looked at his bone fingers, on which nine out of ten he wore rings, with only the left hand ring finger being empty.

In Yggdrasil, it had been normally impossible to wear rings on any finger but the left and right ring finger. But since Momonga used the special ability from a magic item, he could wear rings on all fingers and also use their abilities as well. Not only was he considered special, he was also known to be among the best ability users on the server.

One of the rings on Momonga’s fingers was the ring of Ainz Ooal Gown. It allowed him to freely teleport between the floors inside Nazarick. Every member of Ainz Ooal Gown was required to wear this ring. After activating it, he started to warp through a dark tunnel until he reached the white light at the end. “Success…”

After the teleport succeeded, Momonga continued walking on a flooring of a wide passage. The air around this floor was grassy and earthy, it had the smell of a forest. Momonga became more and more confident of this world having become the reality. A question came to his mind while he was walking. Since he was all bones and had neither lungs nor trachea inside his body, how was he able to breathe? Some serious doubts overcame him, but he started to feel stupid and immediately gave up thinking about it.

Having almost reached the end of the passage, a door automatically opened for Momonga. On the other side was a large arena surrounded by several layers of an auditorium. This oval complex had a length of one hundred eighty-eight meters, a width of one hundred fifty-six meters and a height of forty-eight meters. It was modelled after the Colosseum of the Roman Empire. A spell called ‘Continual Light’ was cast over the entire structure and therefore it was always bright as daylight inside. The audience consisted of numerous golems who showed no signs of activity.

This place was called The Arena. The part of gladiators was played by the intruders and the audience would consist of the golems and the members of Ainz Ooal Gown sitting in the VIP lounge. No matter how tenacious or numerous the invaders were, they were here to meet their end. At the moment, a black night sky could be seen at the top of the arena and if there was no illumination magic nearby, you could even see the stars in the sky twinkle.

The sixth floor of Nazarick was covered by an illusion sky. Not only did it slowly change over time, it even had a rising sun, complete with daylight effects. One could feel relaxed while living in this fictional scenario, so it had been worth the effort for his guild members. Although his mood was improving while staying here, the current situation didn't allow him to tarry. He looked around. *This arena should be managed by those twins…* Then suddenly—

"Hey there!" With a shout, someone jumped down from the VIP lounge with a silhouette. It was a six-story complex and there was no use of magic, just simple physical skills. Her gentle curved feet eliminated the impact and she showed a proud expression with a "V" sign for victory with her hand. A girlish looking child with a cute and a warm smile on her face. Her gold hair drifting near her shoulders reflected the surroundings. Different colors of blue and green pupils made her eyes shine like a puppy. Her long pointy ears and darkish skin showed that she was a dark elf, a close relatives of the forest elves.

Equipped with a reddish black dragon scales on light leather fitting and a white and gold embroidered vest on her chest with the Ainz Ooal Gown emblem. Below, she wore a set of white trousers and on her neck hang an acorn necklace emitting golden light. A whip was wrapped around her waist and on her back was a giant bow, the grip being decorated with exotic engravings.

"Ah, Aura." Momonga walked towards the dark elf and called her out by name. She was a Guardian of the sixth floor inside the Great Tomb of Nazarick, Aura Bella Fiora. She was capable of controlling magic beasts as a beast tamer and a master of guerrilla warfare. With small mouse steps, Aura start running towards Momonga. The steps looked small, but she was faster than a beast. Both acute and closing in distance fast. Aura turned on the emergency brake with her foot and because of the friction, her shoes made from gold alloy plates raised a dust cloud behind her.

"Puh." Obviously not sweaty, Aura pretended to wipe her forehead and gave a smile similar to a dog who tries to please its master. She greeted Momonga in a childishly unique high timbre: "Welcome, Momonga-sama. Welcome to my guarded floor!" The greeting was not as elegant or as full of respect like Albedo's or Sebas's, but it felt more intimate. For Momonga, he did not know if such sense of intimacy was constrained since he lacked the experience to tell, which gave him a headache.

Everything from Aura's expression and her face being full of smiles told him that there would be no hostility from her. Neither there was any reaction from 'Enemy Scan'. Momonga looked left and right and relaxed his grip on his staff. In case of an emergency situation, he had intended to attack and then retreat at once, but now it seems there is no need for that.

"…Ah, did I disturb you just now?"

"What? Momonga-sama is the owner of Nazarick, the Supreme Ruler! No matter when you visit, it cannot be called disturbance!"

"So… Aura, where is…?" Hearing Momonga's question, Aura did a neat turn and looked to the VIP lounge and shouted: "Momonga-sama is here! Don't be so rude, hurry up!"

In the shadow of the VIP lounge, you could see a shadow shaking. "Mare, you there?"

“Yes, yes, Momonga-sama. Because that guy is very timid… He doesn’t want to jump off!” A barely audible voice responded to Aura’s call. Because of the distance to the VIP lounge, normally a miracle would be needed to hear it. But because Aura wore a magical necklace on her neck, it did not pose a problem for her, “No, no… Sister…”

Aura sighed and explained: “That, that… Momonga, Sir, he is just very timid, and certainly doesn’t have the intention to be rude.”

“I certainly understand that Aura, and I never doubt your loyalty.” As a community, we must understand the timing of words and the truth behind them. Sometimes telling a white lie is needed to reassure the other party, Momonga nodded firmly. Aura seemed to be relieved and turned her face to the VIP lounge again.

“The Supreme Master, Momonga-sama came to this floor to meet the Guardians. This is utterly insolent; you should be fully aware of this! If you are too scared to jump off, I'll come and kick you down!”

“Um… I will take the stairs down…”

“How long do you intend to make Momonga-sama wait?! Come on down, now!”

“I know, I know…!”

With all his courage, a small figure jumped down. A Dark Wizard was the class of this dark elf. His feet landed on the ground in very unstable manner, unlike Aura’s. Probably because of the lack of physical dexterity, the impact from the drop made him unbalanced. After his rough landing, he ran towards them at full speed, but he was slower compared to Aura.

“Hurry up!”

“Yes, yes…” A child with an identical appearance as Aura appeared. No matter the length of hair, its color, eye color, or facial appearance, the twins’ resemblance couldn’t be any closer. But if Aura is the sun, then he is the moon. One was trembling in fear, while the other was scolding.

Momonga felt surprised how they revealed these expressions. According to what Momonga knew from past, Mare's personality was not programmed to be like that. NPC’s just had the basic kind of expressions and even if the role of NPC got extended, they shouldn’t be able to change expressions freely. These two dark elf kids before Momonga showed myriad of facial expressions.

“Sorry to keep you waiting, Momonga-sama…” The child looked fearful and glanced at Momonga. He was wearing a dull blue dress made of dragon scales and a short nature green cloak made from leaves. Although the outfit had the same white base as Aura, the lower body exposed less skin because of the skirt. A necklace akin to Aura’s was hanging around his neck and in turn was made of acorns emitting silver light. His slender hands covered in white silk gloves were holding onto a twisted black branch staff.

Mare Bello Fiore. Mare and Aura were both Guardians of the sixth floor inside Nazarick. Momonga narrowed his eyes and although his eye sockets were empty, he observed them both. Aura stood tall, while Mare timidly withstood Momonga's gaze. Like in the past, it looked like they are still his companions.

"You are in good spirit, very good."

"Oh, it has become a bit dull recently, occasional invaders would be nice…"

"I, I do not want to see an intruder… I would become afraid…" Hearing Mare's timid speech, Aura's face changed: "…Oh. Momonga-sama, please excuse me for a while. Mare, follow me."

"Ah, ah, it hurts. Sister, sister, please, it's painful, ah." After seeing Momonga gently nodding, Aura grabbed Mare's slightly pointy ear. After they left Momonga's side, she whispered into Mare's ear. Even from the distance he could hear, Aura reprimanded Mare.

"Ah, intruders. Mare just like you, I too do not want to see them…"

Or at least I hope to meet the enemy after being well prepared, Momonga thought after looking at the twin Guardians from afar. After Mare recovered from the verbal attacks of Aura, he was kneeling on the ground with a watery-eyed face. A sight that seemed to explain the familial relationship between the twins. Momonga saw it and revealed a smile while thinking to himself: *He he, Mare is clearly not well suited for killing enemies. It would suit him more to make tea and listen to her sister. But thinking about it… Mare and Aura already died once… How have they dealt with it?*

In the past, fifteen hundred people invaded this place en masse and even reached the eighth floor. That time both Aura and Mare had died. They should be able to remember that, right? What is the concept of death for those two now? In the end, did it have a significant impact on them? According to Yggdrasil's settings, each death cost 5 levels and the drop of an equipped item.

If the character had five or less levels, he/she would disappear on death. But because player characters had a special protection, they wouldn't disappear, but instead the level was reduced to one. The advantage of the 'rebirth', 'resurrection of the dead', and other types of resurrection magic, is that they can reduce the downsides of death. Not only that, if you used the right item, you only had to pay little experience.

In the case of NPC, it was even simpler. As long as the guild paid the resurrection fee adjusted to the target's level, the resurrection would have no adverse effects. Death was often used to downgrade strong players. A level upgrade required lot of experience and even if it were to be only a drop of an equipment, is was still a heavy punishment.

However, in Yggdrasil, the downgrading wasn't a terrible thing. I had heard that the game production company hoped that the players wouldn't fear level downgrading and thus dared to go to new areas for adventures. The brave would discover the unknown and new things in dungeons. Faced with these death rules, the two of them had once had 1,500 people before them who tried to kill them. Are these two different people after the resurrection?

While he wanted to confirm it, he did not want to arouse suspicions. Perhaps the massive invasion had been a horrible experience for Aura. Just for the sake of his own curiosity, it wouldn't be good asking her this. The most important thing for Ainz Ooal Gown members were their beloved NPCs they had created.

The concept of death in the past and the present had likely changed. Death in the real world, of course meant that everything is over. But now? Maybe not anymore. Although I think that I must

test it, but before obtaining a variety of information, I am unable to decide further actions. So it would be wiser to shelve the matter until future consideration.

So far, Momonga knew that Yggdrasil has changed to this degree, but there still exists lot of questions. Just as Momonga thought about these things, Aura continued her preaching. Momonga felt that this was a bit pathetic. In the past, his companions and brothers-in-arms fought amongst themselves, while Momonga stayed quietly on the sidelines. But now it was different.

"Let us stop here for now, okay?"

"But Momonga-sama, as a Guardian, Mare—!"

"Don't worry Aura, I understand your feelings as a Floor Guardian. Of course you will feel unhappy when Mare says such cowardly words in front of me. But I also believe that if someone invaded the Great Tomb of Nazarick, you and Mare would bravely stand and fight until the end. As long as he is able to guarantee this, you don't need to blame him excessively like this."

Aura walked towards Mare and pulled him up while Momonga spoke to him: "Mare, having seen you in this state, your kind sister will forgive you. You'd better be thankful to her." Mare, exposed slightly surprised expression and looked at his sister. Aura hastily said: "Uh? No, no, that is not how it is! You better be grateful to Momonga-sama!"

"Aura, it does not matter to me. Your goods intentions are well received. I do not doubt Mare's ability as a Floor Guardian."

"Ah, yes, yes! Thank you, Momonga-sama."

"Thank, thank you."

They saluted respectfully and Momonga couldn't help but to feel a little uncomfortable. In particular, the twins pierced Momonga with adoring eyes. Never been so respected, Momonga tried to hide his shyness and deliberately coughed a bit: "Well, yes, I would like to ask you, Aura, do you feel bored with no intruders coming?"

"Ah, no, that, that…" Seeing Aura's fearful expression, Momonga felt that he had asked the question in wrong tone: "I won't admonish you, so please speak to your heart's content."

"…Yes, slightly bored. There are no opponents nearby who can keep up a fight for more than 5 minutes with me."

While answering, she put her index fingers close together. As a Guardian of this floor, she was level 100. There were only few who can rival in her power in the whole Nazarick. Speaking of NPCs, including Aura and Mare, there are a total of nine people who can match her, with one exception.

"What if you take Mare as your opponent?" Suddenly, Mare's body started to shake. He shook his head constantly with moist eyes and looked panicky. Aura looked at the scared Mare and sighed. With her sigh, a sweet scent filled the surrounding. Thinking about Aura's ability, Momonga backed away from the smell. "Ah, sorry, Momonga-sama!" Aura hurried with her hand and dispersed the air.

Passive Skill… Aura who has the beast trainer's special skills, can also activate a special kind of strengthening and weakening effects with this skill. This skill was activated through breathing and the effect reached several meters in radius. If the user actively uses the skill, the effects could be extended to reach incredible distances and sometimes even tens of meters in radius. In Yggdrasil, for the effects of strengthening and weakening statuses, an icon would appear in front of you to show if it's active or not. But now that these icons didn't appear anymore, it was quite cumbersome.

"There, I stopped the effect!"

"This ah…"

"…But Momonga-sama is undead, the effect of this skill should be useless against you, right?" In Yggdrasil it had been true. The undead were immune to various effects, whether they were beneficial or harmful, it was all the same. "…Have I entered the effects range yet?"

"Well." Aura shrunk her neck, even Mare next to her did the same. "…I'm not angry, Aura." Momonga tried as gently as possible to appease them. "Aura… You do not need to be so afraid. Do you think such casually resorted skill can affect me? I simply ask you, am I within the range of the effect."

"Yes! You have already entered the effective range of my ability." Aura felt relieved to hear Momonga's response. Momonga felt a pressure inside his robes and his stomach started throbbing. So if he weakens, what should he do? Every time he thought of this, he wanted to push this idea aside.

"So what is the effect?"

"The result… should be 'Fear'."

"Well, well…" He did not feel 'Fear'. In Yggdrasil, members of the guild or team-mates cannot attack each other. Although this rule should not count anymore, it still should be confirmed in advance. "I remember now; Aura's ability should not have a negative effect on allies."

"Huh?" Aura could not help herself from staring in surprise. Mare also gave the same expression next to her. Momonga could tell from these two's expressions that his conjecture was false. "Did I remember it wrong?"

"Yes, I can only freely change the effect's range, maybe you got confused with this?" Rules that prohibited companions from attacking each other were really not in effect. Mare who is nearby seemed to be unaffected, maybe he is equipped with items that prevent this. The divine items Momonga is equipped with do not have a resistance against this effect, so is it because of him being undead?

Why doesn't Momonga feel 'Fear'? There are two hypotheses. Either he is relying on the values of his basic abilities to block it. Or it is blocked because of his special ability, 'The Spirit of the Deceased'. Because he couldn't know which conjecture is right, he had to conduct further experiments: "Can you try to use the effects on others?"

Aura tilted her head and made a strange questioning sound. Once again, it reminded Momonga of a puppy's look and he cannot help but reach out and pat Aura's head. Her head felt smooth like silk and quite comfortable. Because Aura did not reveal any unpleasant expression, Momonga couldn't help but want touch her face as well. But with Mare's eyes staring from the side, Momonga gave up.

What could Mare be thinking about this? After a brief reflection, Momonga released his staff and stroked Mare's hair with his other hand. Mare's hair seemed to feel nicer and while Momonga absently thought about these things, he finally remembered: "I need to trouble you with something. I have various experiments in progress… For which I'd like to request for your help."

They were still a bit overwhelmed, but after Momonga took his hands off their heads, they revealed a shy and somewhat proud expression. Aura happily responded: "Yes, I will do it! Momonga-sama, please ask me anything."

"First wait—" Momonga took the floating staff into his hand. There are abilities regarding the staff as well. Among its many capabilities, Momonga chose one of the decorative jewels embedded in it. One of the Relic class, 'Moon Jade'.

'Call Moonlight Wolf'. The 'Moon Jade' summoned the beasts out of thin air. The beast summoning magic's effects now and those in Yggdrasil were the same, so Momonga wasn't surprised by it. Moonlight Wolf and Siberian Wolf are very similar, except the former radiates silver light. A wonderful mental link existed between him and the Moonlight Wolf, showing clearly which one is the master.

"The Moonlight Wolf, huh?" Aura's voice implied that she couldn't understand the meaning of summoning such a weak monster. Moonlight Wolfs are fairly agile and can be used to launch surprise attacks, but it has only a level around twenty or so. From Momonga's and Aura's perspective, it is quite a weak monster. But for this purpose, the level of this monster is enough. No, rather the lower it was, the better.

"Okay, I will include it in my breathing effect's range."

"Hm? Can you?"

"No problem." Momonga felt hesitant to force Aura do it so boldly. It is not exactly the same as it had been in the game, so there is a chance that she might disobey him. And there is a possibility that the effect of Aura's ability doesn't manifest properly. To avoid this situation from reoccurring, they must involve a third-party, thus the summoning of the Moonlight Wolf.

The wolf was forced near expiration in of Aura's few breaths, but Momonga didn't feel discomfort at all. He tried to relax and seemingly had no unexpected feelings. He was in the same area of effect as the Moonlight Wolf, who seemed to be affected, so he could be sure that Aura's skills had activated for real. From this experiment one could learn that the skills affecting mental functions seem be invalid for Momonga. This means…

In the game for demi-human and heteromorphic races, as long as the class reached a predetermined racial hierarchy stage, you could get a special ability for one's race. As for a heteromorphic Elder Lich such as Momonga, he also had these special abilities.

Each day summoning four high-tier undead, twelve mid-tier undead, twenty low-tier undead, 'Negative Contact', 'Despair Aura V (Instant Death)', 'Negative Guard', 'Dark Soul', 'Dark Light', 'Immortal Blessing', 'Ability to Evaluate Damage IV', 'Thrusting Weapon Resistance V', 'Slashing Weapons Resistance V', 'Higher-tier Repel Resistance III', 'Higher-tier Magic Invalidation III', 'Ice/Lightning/Acid Elements Invalidation', 'Magical Vision Strength/See Through'.

Also additional capabilities from class levels; 'Instant Death Magic Strengthening', 'Skilled Dark Rituals', 'Immortality Aura', 'Create Undead', and so on. The basic special abilities of undead; 'Fatal Blow Invalidation', 'Ineffective Mental Functions', 'Food/Poison/Sick/Sleep/Paralysis/Instant Death Invalidation', 'Necromancer Magic', 'Flesh Damage Resistance', 'Oxygen Need Invalidation', 'Ability Weaken Invalidation', 'Drain Resistance', 'Negative Energy Recovery', 'Night Vision'.

Of course there are also weaknesses for all that the beneficial traits; 'Divine Weakness', 'Sacred Attack Vulnerability IV', 'Strike Weapons Fragility V', 'Sacred Damage Punishment II', 'Fire Damage Doubled', and so on. These basic capabilities are learned as undead and special abilities are acquired during the upgrades. The abilities of Momonga are very high.

"So, with this result… Thank you. Aura, do you have any questions?"

"No, not really."

"This will do, go back now." The three Moonlight Wolfs disappeared without a trace.
"…Momonga-sama, did you come to our floor today to do experiments?" Mare also nodded.
"Huh? Ah, that's not it. I came to train."

"Training? Huh? Momonga-sama, you?" Aura and Mare's eyes widened until they were about to fall off. It was such a surprise, that me who is of the highest order and also the Ruler of the Great Tomb of Nazarick, wanted to train.

This reaction was predictable and Momonga quickly replied: "Yes." Seeing Momonga' brief response, Aura's expression began to return to her usual one. Momonga was quite satisfied of this reaction.

"Please, may I ask then, what is the highest class of weapon that Momonga-sama is capable of using, the legendary one?" Legendary one? Momonga seemed a bit puzzled, but after seeing Mare's eyes sparkle, he realized that the question was honest and without any malice.

"Yes, this is it… All the guild members worked together to craft this weapon. A weapon of the highest order, Staff of Ainz Ooal Gown." Momonga raised his staff and it immediately reflected ambient and beautiful light. However, at the same time with the light appeared ominous and shaking shadows which could only be felt by those aligned with evil.

Momonga sounded prouder than ever and his voice had become even more excited. "This staff has seven snakes engraved in it with gems of Mythical and Relic classes. Because it belongs to an entire series of items, after the complete collection, one can display immense power. We spent tremendous effort and time to complete this entire collection.

In fact, one member of the guild wanted to give up on the idea during the collection. I don't know how many monsters we fought to get the treasures… Not only that, this staff has the ability to

overcome the Mythical class itself and is comparable to a World class item. The most powerful ability is, the automatic engagement… Ahem."

…He got too excited. Although in the past his companions built it together, but because it was never taken outside the Throne Room, there was no opportunity to show it off. Since it was out now, he wanted to show it to others. Momonga wanted to continue showing it off, however his emotions stopped him. He was too ashamed. "…That's it."

"Wow, So strong…"

"You are the strongest, Momonga-sama!" The two children's sparkling eyes almost made Momonga laugh. The efforts to resist it almost blew away his expression. Originally, there were no expressions for this skull—he continued: "So I would like to make an experiment with this staff and I hope you can help me with it."

"Yes! We will prepare it immediately. Then… We can see the power of this staff?"

"Well, of course. I will let you experience the most powerful weapon I can hold."

"Awesome!" Aura shouted excitedly while doing a cute jump. Mare tried to conceal his excitement, but his long-ears didn't stop shivering as evidence of him failing to contain it. *This is bad, I need a serious expression, and therefore I can't be relaxed.* Momonga thought to himself and strived to maintain his dignity and composure.

"…There is one more thing Aura. I have ordered all Floor Guardian to come over here. They will be all be gathered here in less than one hour."

"Huh? Then we have to get ready…"

"No, it is not necessary, we wait here until they come."

"Ah, all Floor Guardians? Then Shalltear will come as well?"

"Yes, all the Floor Guardians."

"…Oh." Aura's long ears suddenly started to droop. But unlike Aura, Mare seemed to be excited. According to their body language, Aura and Shalltear didn't get along with each other, unlike Mare. *What will happen from now on?* Momonga sighed softly.

Part 2

A total number of 50 soldiers rode through the grasslands. Every one of them in their ranks being muscular, vigorous and particularly eye-catching. 'Robust' would be the perfect word to describe these men. Even while wearing breastplates, you could see their muscles underneath. A man around thirty years old, sunbathed dark face with noticeable wrinkles, short black trimmed hair and black eyes, sharp like a sword looked to the man beside himself.

"Captain, we are approaching the first village on our patrol."

“Yes, that's right, Lieutenant.” Re-Estize Kingdom’s proud warrior Gazef Stronoff, had yet to see any villages. Suppressing his own eagerness, Gazef urged his horse to maintain constant speed. Although the current speed should not tire the horse too much, it had been on a forced march since the royal capital. Little by little, fatigue gradually penetrating deeper into its body. Even a horse would be tired after this long trip and therefore he could not continue to increase his horse’s burden.

“I hope nothing happened.” A little uneasiness was hidden in this sentence. Gazef also shared the sentiment. The king who issued the command, asking Gazef to investigate the sightings of Imperial Knights near the border. If found, they should immediately confront them. Originally, since it was at the outskirts of the city E-Rantel, sending troops from there would be faster. However, taking into account that the enemy were well armed and trained Imperial Knights, this would have been a bad idea.

In the Kingdom, the only ones who could compete with the Imperial Knights, were soldiers under Gazef’s direct command. Suppressing Imperial raids had become Gazef’s responsibility completely and this gave him a headache. Before Gazef arrived at the destination, one could mobilize other soldiers to protect the villages.

It would be enough to resist and gain valuable time for them. There are many other ways to resist. But nothing was done… No, nobody was allowed to do anything. Knowing the reasons as to why, Gazef’s anxiety became endless. He was trying to calm down while his hands clasped the reins tightly. It was difficult to suppress the burning inside his heart.

“Captain, it is foolish that nobody starts the searching until we arrive. Not only that, why can’t they bring in other forces to search separately? Like recruiting adventurers with commissions. They could also search for Imperial Knights. Why wasn’t any such action taken?”

“…Stop it Lieutenant, if Imperial Knights appeared in the territory of the Kingdom at broad daylight, the situation would be much worse.”

“Captain, there is no one else around. I hope you can tell me the truth.”

The Lieutenant’s face showed contempt smile of contempt, which didn’t show kindness in the slightest and spoke with disdain: “It’s because of those nobles, right?” Gazef did not answer back, because he knew it was the truth. “Those damn nobles actually use people's lives as tools in their power struggle! Not only that, because this territory is directly under the King’s control, they will use this to ridicule the King.”

“…Not all nobles think that way.”

“Perhaps the Captain is right, there are also nobles who live for the sake of the people, for example Golden Princess. However, there are only few… If we could only centralize the power on the King, then we can oppose those damn nobles for the sake of the people right?”

“But if you rush things, perhaps it would lead to civil war and our country’s territory would be split apart. Presently, our Kingdom is facing the neighboring Empire’s ambitions to expand its territories. If a crisis such as a civil war were to occur, it would become a national disaster.”

“I know, but…”

“Let’s stop for the time being…”

Gazef went quiet and his eyes gazed straight ahead. Smoke was curling upwards behind a small hill in front of them. The people present all knew what such a sign meant. Gazef could not help but to click his tongue. In gallops, he rode to the small hill in front of him and a scene he had expected appeared. The whole village was scorched to ruins. A few burned roof structures looked like erected tombstones inside this ruin. Gazef ordered with a firm voice: “Everyone be ready. We need to take action fast.”

The village was completely burned down and the remains of the houses barely showed their original appearance. Walking through the ruins, Gazef smelled the smell of fire mixed with blood. Gazef's face was very calm, he felt no emotional ups and downs. But looking closely into his expression one could clearly see his mood. Walking beside him, his Lieutenant had the same expression. More than one hundred people in the village and only six had survived. In addition, everyone was mercilessly killed. No matter who, woman, child or even baby, all the same.

“Lieutenant, send a few people to escort the survivors back to E-Rantel.”

“Wait a minute, under these…”

“You're right, under these circumstances, we have to protect them.”

“Yes, E-Rantel is one of the King's demesnes. And it is the King's obligations to protect the surrounding villages. If the survivors were abandoned here, it would cause a huge problem to the King. You can imagine, the aristocratic factions would deliberately use this opportunity to stir trouble and weaken the King’s influence. More importantly—”

“Please think about it. These survivors have all witnessed the knights of the Empire. This was the King’s first assigned priority. I think we should take our men and temporary retreat to E-Rantel. We need to be prepare appropriately for the next step.”

“No.”

“Captain! You should be very aware of it, that this is definitely a trap. This village got attacked at the same time as we are on our way to E-Rantel, it cannot be a coincidence. These brutal acts are definitely to lure us in or else they would not be this ruthless. This is absolutely a downright trap.”

“The survivors did not escape the hostility of the knights by hiding, it was thanks to the enemy’s mercy. I am afraid that they planned this. In order to protect the survivors, they want us to divide our troops.”

“Captain, you would not chase them down even knowing that this is a trap, right?”

“…I am.”

“Are you serious about it?! Captain, you are really strong. Even if facing one hundred knights, you can definitely win. But the Empire has a famous magician. If this old man is with the enemy, it can become quite dangerous, even for you. Even if captain encounters the pride of the Empire, the four

paladins, they are likely to lose against you. So I beg you, please retreat for now. For the sake of the Kingdom, even if several villages are sacrificed, it cannot be compared to the loss of captain's life!"

Gazef quietly listened, while the Lieutenant continued excitedly: "If you do not want to retreat… Then how about abandoning the survivors and all of us chase them with you."

"This is perhaps the most sensible choice… But doing so is equal to letting them die. The survivors here, do you think they can survive alone?" The Lieutenant became speechless, because he knew that the chance of survival was almost nil for the survivors. If they do not send people to protect them and bring them to a safe place, they will be killed within a few days. Even so, what the Lieutenant was not wrong… No, right and wrong does not matter here.

"…Captain, your life is most valuable, it cannot be compared to the lives of the villagers." Gazef fully understood the pain of his Lieutenant's decision, that's why he allowed him say such things. But even so, he still cannot agree with him: "I was born as a civilian and you as well."

"Yes, but most soldiers join the army because of their admiration for captain."

"I remember that you were to also born in a village?"

"Yes, I did…"

"Village life is not easy and people often have die in their neighborhood. Suffering from monster attacks, such were common situation and often causes many casualties, is not it?"

"…Yes."

"When encountering monsters, even a normal soldier would simply be overwhelmed. If there is no money to hire specialized adventurers against these monsters, they can only bow to the monster and wait."

"…Yes."

"So you never hoped for help? When needing help and when the nobles don't move a finger, who would have the strength to do so?"

"…They would be only looking forward for a lie, because in fact no one ever helps. The aristocracy would never give money to the affected villages."

"That being the case… Let us prove that the reality is not like this. I want to help the villagers."

The Lieutenant became speechless after remembering his own experiences. "My friend, let us show the villagers what it means to face danger while willing to sacrifice our lives, knowing that the brave will come to rescue and that it is true that the strong with help the weak." Gazef and the Lieutenant made eye contact and exchanged countless emotional with each other.

Lieutenant finally gave up and responded in a little tired and impassioned tone: "…Then let me go and take the leadership of the men. There are numerous who can replace me, but no one that can replace Captain."

“Don’t be stupid. Ever since my past, my survival rate has been relatively high. We are not going there to die, but to save the people of the Kingdom.” The Lieutenant wanted to open his mouth several times, but finally chose to shut up. “Immediately pick some soldiers to protect the villagers and go to E-Rantel with them.”

♦ ♦ ♦

A red sunset shone on the prairie with many shadows. The exact number was 45 people. This group of people suddenly appeared from empty place. It was clever way of disguise made possible with magic. This group of people did not look like simple mercenaries, travelers or adventurers. At glance, they all wore the same clothes. Wearing equipment that were crafted from a special metal to increase both mobility and defense.

Strengthened by magical effects, their clothing surpassed any conventional defenses. Carrying a small leather bag, if there were no additional magic signs on top, it would look like a traveler’s backpack. On their waists were belts carrying a few bottles of liquid and a cloaks on their backs which exuded magical auras.

Regardless of the money, time and effort, to put together so many magic items wasn’t easy. The group of figures who wore this kind of magic equipment proved that they had support on a national level. By the look of their equipment, there were no signs of any identities or affiliation.

They were illegal troops, who had to hide their own identity. The group of people's eyes, looked to the front towards the wasted village. While looking, the smell of blood and burnt streamed out of the village. From their eyes one could see that normally they didn’t like to watch a cold-blooded ruthless scene.

“…Fled huh.” Said a dull voice which sounded slightly disappointed. “…There is no other way. Prepare to attack the next village to bait him out. We have to lure the beast into our trap.” The men look at Gazef’s shadow departing towards the same direction as a group of people. “Tell me the next targeted village for our bait.”

Part 3

In the arena, Momonga prepared himself to cast a spell on a scarecrow in the corner. Apart from simple magic damage, the spells that Momonga had learned were specialized in instant death and other ‘add additional damaging effects’ categories. He had relatively low amount of non-lethal spells. In fact, whenever he chose to simply cast a damage type magic, because Momonga’s class choice was Necromancer, it would automatically strengthen the magic damage because of the ‘add additional damaging effects’. As a result, a mere damage spell deals more damage than some spell from an enhanced combat class.

Momonga looked at the side and saw that he was exposed to the curious eyes of two children. His heart felt some pressure, since he held uncertainty of not knowing whether or not he would meet their expectations. Momonga secretly looked towards two huge monsters. Their huge size reached up to three meters in height. They had a mix of human and dragon bones, highly trained strong muscles and scales harder than steel to cover these muscles.

They had a dragon’s face, a tail thick like a tree and no wings. They looked like dragons on two feet. Their upper arms were thicker than any man's and about as half as long as their body,

holding a thick sword that resembled a shield. These two monsters were from the dragon lineage and were summoned by Aura. As a beast tamer, she had the ability to control them and she used them to organize the Arena games.

Although their levels were only fifty-five with almost no special abilities, they attacked with endless stamina while using their robust arms. It was enough to rival against a high-tier monster. Momonga sighed and moved his sight back to the scarecrow again. His eyes were looking towards the scarecrow and if you looked closely, you could see that he was quite nervous. His aim was to confirm that he was still able to use magic.

By allowing Aura and Mare to see this "magical experiments", his main purpose was to demonstrate his power and let them know that making an enemy out of him would be a foolish thing to do. And he had to do this before the other Guardians arrive. These two kids do not seem to have slightest sign of betrayal and he didn't think they would betray him. However, if he had lost the ability to use magic, Momonga wasn't confident that they would keep their allegiance.

Aura's attitude towards Momonga felt like as if she had known him for a long time. For him however, it felt like this was their first meeting. It can be seen that the role settings of these two were all carefully crafted. They were the brainchildren of the guild. However, emotional reactions and behavioral patterns to various conditions were not perfect and had some flaws.

But now that they became intelligent entities with their own thinking, these flaws could probably affect their behavior somehow. If it did not make their loyalty conditions weak, then what could have changed? On another note, the amount of their loyalty was never clearly documented in their programming. Thus whether or not they obey orders might also vary. If it were simply as to not obey orders, it could be handled. However, what to do if they betray him immediately after they find out that he doesn't have enough power…?

Although being too paranoid is bad, it isn't wise to trust them completely either. In short, currently for Momonga, the best idea was to be cautious. Another reason for this experiment was, that if he cannot use magic, he could discuss it with Aura and Mare. These two children believe that this experiment is to confirm the power of the staff, so the magic power would depend on the item itself. If there was a problem with his magic, he could easily use the staff as excuse. The plan was perfect. Momonga couldn't help but praise himself. In the past, had his mind always been so calm and flexible? No one could answer this question for him.

The doubts inside him were thrown out the window and he began to think about the magic used in Yggdrasil. Inside the game, magic spell strength was rated by tiers from one to ten and there were easily over six thousand spells in total. The spells were separated between different types of systems. There were seven hundred spells from eighteen different systems that he could use. In general, level 100 players could usually only use three hundred different spells, so the number of spells Momonga could use was quite unusual. Almost all of these spells were stored inside Momonga's mind and he was searching for the most appropriate spell to use right now.

Because the prohibition of friendly fire had been lifted, he had to know the exact effect range of the spell. It was therefore important, for the magic attacks not to select number of targets, but range of effect. The next goal was to take into account the scarecrow, so… In Yggdrasil, just pressing the icon would have activated the magic spell.

However, in the absence of the interface, he had to use other methods. Although bit uncertain, he had little understanding of how to cast it. He felt the power hidden inside his body. It seemed like the contact wasn't properly established. Momonga concentrated. He imagined it floating in the air—

Momonga smiled quite happily. He now knew the approximate ranges of effects and how long it would take launch the next spell. These had been thoroughly mastered in the past. After confirming his abilities, a new kind of excitement overcame him. He felt satisfied because he knew that magic was part of his own strength, which he didn't experience inside Yggdrasil. The emergence of the inner joy, although it would rapidly cool down. He was able to feel his excitement at his fingertips, he gathered his force and then with a word:

"「Fireball」." He pointed his finger towards the scarecrow and the expanding fireball flew where he was pointing. As expected, the fireball hit the scarecrow neatly. After the hit, a burst of flames followed and the earth around the scarecrow become a sea of fire. All of it happened in a blink of an eye. Apart from the burning scarecrow, there was nothing left.

"Ohhhh…" Aura and Mare looked with puzzled eyes and could not help but giggle at Momonga. "Aura, prepare a new scarecrow."

"Ah, yes, will do immediately! Go make it ready!" A dragon holding another scarecrow, placed it next to the charred scarecrow. Momonga walked to the scarecrow, faced it and launched a spell: "「Razing Flames」." A sudden pillar of fire surrounded the scarecrow.

Momonga continued to cast spells on the wrecked scarecrow: "「Fireball」." The scarecrow got hit by a fireball and turned into ashes. The intervals between casting different types of magic was just like Yggdrasil. No, it might have actually become faster to cast. In the game, you must first select the range of the cast, then move with the cursor to indicate the scope of it.

"Perfect." Because of these quite satisfactory experimental results, Momonga couldn't help but make a contented sound. "Momonga-sama, do you want me to prepare some more scarecrows?" Aura still looked puzzled. She knew Momonga to be a powerful magician, so she didn't think this level of performance as anything special. But Momonga wanted to give the twins the impression that this was still the case. The purpose of this illustration had been achieved.

"…No, I want to make another experiment." After denying Aura's proposal, Momonga continued to the next test. 'Message'. The primary objective to contact a GM. When you used 'Message' magic inside Yggdrasil, as long as the other person was in-game, you could hear a phone ringing sound. If there was no sound, the contact would immediately cut off on itself.

Right now, it felt like he heard and listened inside of his mind. It felt like there was a continuous thread extending in search for the contacted person. For Momonga it was the first time ever experiencing this feeling, thus very difficult to describe it. This feeling lasted for some time, but if finally, there was no indication of contact, the effect of 'Message' will end.

A strong sense of disappointment rose inside. Momonga repeated the same cast of magic. The selected person wasn't a GM, but his past companions— Ainz Ooal Gown guild members. After ninety-nine tries and with nothing happening he was in a mood to give up. He did 'Send Message to All' to all of the forty members, but there was no contact. After this confirmation, Momonga

gently shook his head. Even if he knew he had been long abandoned, once the facts were before him, he still felt very disappointed. Finally, he used the magic to contact Sebas.

On contact. This way he can determine that the 'Message' magic is still usable and that it was not limited to the people in this world. 『Momonga-sama.』 Voice of deep respect passed into his mind. Momonga thought that perhaps on the other side, Sebas bowed respectfully, just like he would do in the real world. While thinking about these silly things and keeping silent, it felt strange for Sebas and he spoke again: 『…May I ask what you need?』

"Ah, sorry, I got lost for a moment. Yes, how is the situation in the outside surroundings?"

『Yes, the surrounding region is grasslands and I did not find any intelligent life.』

"Grassland… Not a swamp?" The surrounding of the Great Tomb of Nazarick should be a large swamp. It is home to a frog like monster called Zwick. A mist-shrouded surrounding of a poisonous swamp. 『Yes, the surrounding is a grassland.』 Momonga couldn't help but to smile gently. This situation was bit too much…

"The Great Tomb of Nazarick was transferred to an unknown place entirely…? Sebas, is there anything floating in the sky, or has any kind of magic incantation appeared?"

『No, I don't see anything like that. The sky is endless, like the one in the sixth floor.』

"What! You say the sky…? Surrounded by nothing strange?"

『No… There is nothing strange anywhere to be found. Apart from Nazarick, there are no other buildings to be found outside.』

"Is that so… Is that so…"

What to say? It seems that Momonga couldn't get his mind to believe it. However, his heart knew that it was probably true. Sebas stayed silent while awaiting further command. Momonga looked towards his left wrist guard band. In about another twenty minutes, the other Guardians would arrive. If this was the result, then there is only one order he can issue. "Be back in twenty minutes. Return to Nazarick and come to the arena where all the Guardians are set to come. Tell us of the troubles and things you have seen."

『Yes, Sir.』

"So collect as much information as possible before coming back."

After hearing the other party agreeing, Momonga lifted 'Message' spell to cut off the contact. While Momonga thought that things have come to an end and almost sighed to himself, he suddenly remembered the twins' eyes staring at him. Now that he had have shown them the power of the staff, he should let them experience a task.

Holding the staff, Momonga hesitated while not knowing which magic to display. Hidden inside Ainz Ooal Gown's staff were countless forces of monsters and if Momonga wished so, he could use 'Quick Summon' for them. There was a relatively nice and gorgeous little magic… 'Summon

Primal Fire Elemental'. Momonga thought and chose the fire gem and activated one spell hidden inside the gem, 'Summon Primal Fire Elemental'.

Complying with the intent of Momonga, the dangling gem inside the snake's mouth began to shake and a strong force started to pour out of it. Momonga held the Ainz Ooal Gown's staff up and a huge ball of light started glowing in front of it. The ball of light produced another bigger sphere of light with a whirlpool of flames surrounding it. The flame vortex rotated faster and faster, and it finally transformed into a diameter of four meters wide and six meters high fire tornado. Infernal hot air streamed out to the surrounding.

At the corner of his eye, he saw two huge bodies from the dragon bloodline in front of Aura and Mare. The hot air blew against Momonga's cloak while making a crackling noise. It would not be surprising if this amazing heat would cause burns. But Momonga had absolute flame resistance to overcome the undead race's original weakness, so there was no impact on him at all.

Soon after, the huge fire tornado became strong enough to melt metal and a blinding light engulfed it, then shook to form into a human shape. Primal Fire Elemental can to be said to be among the highest tiers of elemental monsters itself and was on a level of 85 and above. Same as with Moonlight Wolf, Momonga also felt a wonderful link between him and the elemental.

"Wow…" Aura's voice gave out a sigh, while watching intensely. Absolutely unable to summon the highest tier elemental with their own spells, on Aura's face, an expression of joy emerged, like that on a children receiving Christmas presents. "…Do you want to have a duel with it?"

"Huh?"

"Huh, huh?" Slightly stunned for a moment, Aura exposed an innocent child's smile. For a child's smile, her smile was a bit… No, it was too ferocious. As soon as she touched Mare on the side, her revealing smile changed back to a more child like one.

"Really?"

"It does not matter, even if you destroy it." Momonga shrugged, while saying it didn't matter. With the staff's power, one can summon one Primal Fire Elemental per day. In other words, as long as the day is over, he would be able to continue and summon another one tomorrow. So even if gets destroyed, it was not much of a loss. "Ah, I suddenly remembered that there was other urgent business to deal with…"

"Mare." One of Aura's hand firmly grasped the hand of Mare and would not let him escape. Aura's smile caused Mare to freeze up. For Momonga it was a cute girl's smile, but if you looked it from the eyes of her twin, it was the exact opposite of a smile. Mare's face could not help but to freeze.

Mare was dragged in front of the Primal Fire Elemental. His eyes were constantly looking around, especially towards Momonga, in plea for help. He gave him an expression like a blooming flower, but only got a prayer back from Momonga. The flower wilted immediately on the spot. "Well, you two just play with it. If you get injured, don't blame me."

“Okay.” Aura answered vibrantly, but one could also hear few inaudible frustrated responses from Mare. Momonga felt that Mare won’t hold a grudge against him from this. He therefore wanted to test the link with his summon and issued the command to the twins to attack the Primal Fire Elemental.

Faced with violent flames radiating from the Fire Elemental, Aura and Mare were facing their enemy in a two to one in battle. Aura attacked the Fire Elemental with her hands holding her whip in air, while Mare used magic to deal damage to it.

“It looks like they will deal with the situation with ease.” While Momonga’s sight left this battle of strength, he started to think about how he should continue investigating the matter. Magic and item activations had already been confirmed. Then next he needed to test his equipment. Of particular importance were the scrolls, staves, wands and other equipment. Magic items like scrolls are destroyed after use, while wands and such needed to be charged with magic before they could be used.

Momonga had a lot of magic items. With his personality, he basically likes to store them instead of using them. He felt it was a pity, so he did not use the consumable items. Even when facing bosses, he did not want to use the most advanced recovery items. He couldn’t be called a cautious personality; he was simply stingy. The items start gradually to accumulate. While he was living in Yggdrasil, Momonga was holding these items inside a box. Where did it go now?

Momonga recalled the image of opening a box of items inside his head and his moved his hand in the air. A part of his hand then suddenly extended into nothingness and disappeared from sight. It was as if a window had opened and Momonga’s hand had traversed into it. In place of the originally empty space emerged a hole with several beautiful wands inside. This hole and Yggdrasil’s item box seemed to be identical.

While moving his hand, the items inside this space changed. Scrolls, short staffs, weapons, armors, ornaments, precious gems, as well as medicine and other consumable magic items were all inside… The number was alarming. Momonga couldn’t help but feel at ease and smiled. With this, even if everyone inside Nazarick became his enemies, Momonga had enough to guarantee his own safety.

Blankly staring at the fight of Aura and Mare, Momonga start summarizing the information he had obtained so far. The NPC’s he so far had encountered, were they programmed? No, they have the same sensibilities as humans and there were no noticeable differences. A program would be unable to show such fine emotions. It should be assumed that due to some reason, they became like humans.

And what was going on this world? He didn’t know. Since the magic from Yggdrasil could be used here, then it would be more appropriate to assume that it was a game like Yggdrasil. But according to his own judgement, that was doubtful. It was nothing like being inside a game. In the end, was it still in the game or in a different world? It should be either of them. Although it was bit weird to ask this question. In what state of mind could he face the future?

He had to confirm to what extend Yggdrasil had influenced this world. If the monsters inside Nazarick and the NPCs are all based on the data from Yggdrasil, then there should be no enemies here. The problem is if they were some other data except the data from Yggdrasil involved. Then

he would have to take a different attitude in facing them. In short, for the time being, he had the highest position here and needed to assume a majestic appearance. If wanted to do that, he had to act appropriately to the position.

What kind of action should he take in the future? He should try to collect clues, although it is unclear how this world worked, at the moment Momonga was simply an ignorant traveler. He must proceed with caution and carefully collect information. If this is a different world, should he strive to find ways to return to his original world? He felt doubtful. If you had friends in the old world, you should do so. Maybe if your parents were still alive, it would be good to think of ways to get home. If there was a family in need of support, or a significant other… But there were no such people waiting for him.

His life was just repeatedly working for his employer then go home. After coming back home from work, login to Yggdrasil and wait for the fellow members to login. He was afraid that this wouldn't happen anymore. Then what value was there back home? But if it was possible to go back, he should try to find way how. Having another option is always better, because there may be hell outside. "What to do now…" Momonga's lonely word echoed in the air.

Part 4

The huge Primal Fire Elemental was slowly melting and disintegrating into thin air. The heat that had been released into the air was also fading gradually. With the disappearance of the Primal Fire Elemental, Momonga had a slight feeling that his dominance over it was also vanishing. Although Primal Fire Elementals have extraordinary destructive strength and durability, their amazing fire damage can be grossly ineffective. For someone with high agility like Aura, it was just a huge target.

Normally Aura should have also lost some health while attacking, but since Mare was a druid, he did not allow such a thing. In fact, Mare was efficiently using magic during the whole fight to assist Aura by strengthening her or weakening the foe. They were very competent in playing the roles of attacker and defender and it can be said that they were a perfect match. At the same time, Momonga also felt the difference between this battle and fighting games. This is a real combat.

"Very exciting… Both of you… have performed really well." Hearing Momonga's heartfelt admiration, the twins smiled from ear to ear: "Thank you for your praise Momonga-sama. It has been a long time since we have had such a great exercise!" The two of them wiped sweat off their faces, however after doing so, they sweated even more, which rolled off their light dark skin.

Momonga silently opened the item box again and took out the magic item, Unlimited Kettle. Inside Yggdrasil there was hunger and thirst, but these needs were totally unrelated to the undead Momonga and therefore he never used this item. At most it would be used for his mount. Similar to a transparent glass, the kettle filled up with fresh water. Because of the cold water, countless drops of water start gathering on the kettle.

He took out two beautiful cups, filled them with water and gave them to the twins: "Aura, Mare, come and drink up."

"Huh? That is too kind of you, Momonga-sama…"

“Yes, my magic can also be changed into water.” Seeing Aura constantly waving her hands and Mare continuously shaking his head, Momonga revealed a smile: “This is a piece of cake. You are always performing well and this is my thanks to you.”

“Wow ah—”

“Woo oh—” Feeling shy and red in the face, Aura and Mare’s hands timidly took the cups: “Thank you, Momonga-sama!”

“To, to even have Momonga-sama pour me water!”

Was it really necessary for them to become this elated? Aura no longer refused, took the cup with both hands and downed it. She was spilling drops of water, which flowed down on her throat and continued to disappear into her chest. Mare was holding the cup with both hands too and drank with small gulps. Just by the way of drinking, the different personalities of the twins became apparent.

While watching their movements, Momonga’s hand touched his own neck. To him, it still felt like there was a layer of skin. His body so far had not felt neither thirsty nor fatigue. Although it was obvious that undead don’t have these feelings, finding out you are no longer a human being should make you want to think that it is all a joke.

Momonga continued to touch his own body. There was no skin, muscles, blood vessels, nerves and organs, only bones. Even if he’s aware of it, it still didn’t feel real and so he was constantly touching his own body. The sense of touch was duller compared to a human. It kind of feels like touching something with a thin cloth in between. On the other hand, whether it is visual or auditory, these senses had become sharper.

When somebody saw a body made of nothing but bones, one would think it would fracture easily. However, every bone was harder than steel. And despite being completely different from the past, he had a strange sense of satisfaction and fulfilment. It felt like this was how his body should be. Maybe this is the reason he didn’t panic when his body turned into bones.

“Want more?” Momonga lifted the Unlimited Kettle and asked the two kids if they wanted to drink more. “Uh, thank you! I have had enough!!”

“Is that right? Then how about you Mare? Still want a drink?”

“Eh! Uh… Uh… I… I’ve had enough. I don’t feel thirsty anymore.” Nodding in response, Momonga recovered the two cups once again and put them back into his item box. Aura suddenly whispered: “I thought Momonga-sama would be more frightening.”

“Ah? Really? If so, then comparing to right now…”

“Now, this is better! Definitely better!”

“Then let’s stay this way.” Hearing Aura’s excited answers, Momonga was little bit surprised on how to respond. “Momonga-sama, surely you won’t be gentle only to us right~” Facing Aura’s question, Momonga didn’t know how to answer and just patted Aura's head. “Hehehe.” Aura

looked like a puppy who discovered her new favorite thing, while Mare was showing a very envious expression.

Suddenly a voice could be heard: “Huh? Could I be the first to arrive?” Although the tone was mature, the voice sounded pretty young and a shadow emerged from the ground. The shadow slowly turned into the shape of a door and an individual emerged from within. Wearing a soft looking, black evening dress with a big, heavy looking skirt. The upper body was dressed in a lace embellished with ribbons and a short tailored jacket. She was wearing long lace gloves and therefore had hardly any exposed skin.

The only term to describe her fine facial features which exposed wax like skin would be ‘real beauty’. Because her silver hair was tied in a single ponytail, therefore it did not cover her face and her dark eyes exuded a pretty and flirtatious look. Appearing to be about fourteen years old, or even younger, her childlike appearance was made of a simple set of cuteness and fineness, a true beauty. But her chest part was a little inconsistent compared to her age, it was highly uplifted.

“…Instantaneous movement is strictly forbidden in Nazarick, weren’t you told not to deliberately use ‘Gate’? You should be able to walk to the arena, so just use your feet Shalltear.” Next to Momonga’s ear sounded an impatient voice. That icy tone was not just the kind of attitude used to tame puppies, but full of hostility. Mare started trembling again and quickly left his sister’s side with small steps.

However, Aura’s 180° change in attitude surprised even Momonga. The girl who used the highest tier of transfer magic to come here was called Shalltear. She didn’t even look at Aura’s grim face, who was standing next to Momonga and instead, walked directly in front of him. Her body was emitting an intriguing smell of perfume.

“…It stinks.” Aura swore. The irony in this sentence, “It could be because it is the smell of undead, since the meat is rotten.” Maybe seeing Momonga raising his arms out of reflex to smell them, Shalltear unhappily frowned: “…These kind of words are very offensive. Momonga-sama is undead you know.”

“What? What nonsense are you talking about Shalltear? How could Momonga-sama be an ordinary undead?! He should have reached a realm above undead or even the level of an undead God.”

Hearing Shalltear and Mare give of an “Ah.” and “En.” sound, although it is a little unclear right now, but in Yggdrasil, Momonga had been just an ordinary undead… He therefore felt little inferior. In short there was no high-tier undead or an undead God in the realm of the dead. “No, but sister, your words from before were still a bit offensive.”

“Oh, really? Well then, let’s try again. *cough* Well… Could it be the smell of the dead meat decaying?”

“That… That should be better.”

Agreeing with Aura’s second try, Shalltear’s slender hands moved towards Momonga’s head and hugged him: “Ah, my master, my one and only ruler, oh dear master.” She opened her red lips,

while exposing her moist tongue. Her tongue was like a creature, licking her lips once in a circle. A fragrant scent came out of her mouth.

Although she was an ideal glamorous beauty and could be identified as one, because of her apparent age people could not help but smile at this contrast. Her height was not enough, even if she wanted to reach out and hug his neck, it would end up looking more like she was hanging around his neck. For Momonga who was not used to girls, this action felt provocative. He wanted to take a step back, but ultimately decided to stay still and didn't make any moves.

She had such a personality? This emerging thought lingered in his mind. Thinking about the past, he remembered this girl was created by his companion Peroroncino-san, so having this kind of personality was not impossible. Since he liked H-Games more than anyone, he was also proud to say 'H-Games are my life.'

Shalltear Bloodfallen's character was created by this good-for-nothing. She is the Guardian of the first three floors inside The Great Tomb of Nazarick, a 'True Ancestor Vampire' and also the masterpiece of the H-Game lover. The settings of all his creations were filled with H-Game stereotypes/roles.

"…Show a little restraint…" For the first time, Shalltear reacted to this deep roar and looked at Aura with a mocking expression: "Ara, shorty, you were here? Since I didn't see you, I thought you were not here yet." Momonga did not intend to intervene to what was just said.

Aura's face was trembling, but Shalltear completely ignored her presence, faced Mare and said: "It must be hard to have such an abnormal sister. It would be better if you quickly get away from your sister, or else one day you will become like her." Mare's face instantly changed because he knew Shalltear intended to use him to start a quarrel with his sister.

But Aura just smiled. "So noisy, you fake boobs." And dropped the bombshell.

"… What nonsense are you talking about—!" Ah, her personality was totally ruined, Momonga could not help but to think this in his mind. Shalltear, after revealing her true nature, did not speak as pretentiously as she had before. "One can tell from just one look; your cleavage is so strange. In the end, how many slices did you put in, huh?"

"Waah— Waah—" Shalltear frantically flailed around, trying to cover up the other side's inappropriate statement about her. On the other hand, Aura smiled wickedly: "The padding is so high… It shifted up while you were walking, right?"

"Gluck!" Being poked by an outstretched finger, Shalltear made a strange noise.

"Bull's-eye! Ha ha ha! You can't hide it any longer~! So because you were worried, you didn't walk and instead used 'Gate', hah!"

"Shut up! Shorty! You're as flat as an airplane runway! I have at least… No, I have a lot of material there!" Shalltear's desperate counterattack. At that moment, Aura revealed an even more sinister smile. Shalltear took a step back as if she was frightened. By reflex, Shalltear covered her chest, it was pathetic. "… I'm only 76 years old so there's still time. Unlike you, an undead who has no future. Oh so pitiful. You will never reach puberty."

Shalltear could not help but groan and took a step back. A speechless expression emerged on her face. Seeing the other's face, Aura revealed a frightening smile: “Actually, I am very satisfied with my chest right now! Poof.” Momonga believed to hear the sound coming from Shalltear’s body when her sanity finally snapped.

“Smelly little devil! Now it is too late for regrets!” Black mist spilled away from Shalltear’s gloved hand. Aura picked up her whip and was ready to engage. Meanwhile, Mare looks somewhat panicked. The current scene felt familiar but Momonga hesitated, wondering whether or not he should stop these two.

The creator of Shalltear, Peroroncino-san and the creator of Aura and Mare, Whitebrim-san, were two siblings who had sometimes been just as noisy as these two were right now. With two noisy people in the background, Momonga recalled the memories of past companions.

“So noisy.” While Momonga was immersed in his old memories, an inhuman creature spoke up in a human like tone, totally unbefitting of his appearance. To this unnatural sound, the two stopped their quarrelling. Looking for the source of the sound, having never noticed its arrival, they discover a cold, weirdly shaped figure.

With an enormous height of 2.5 meters and looking like an insect walking on two feet, as if the devil would make a fusion of a mantis and an ant, it would look like this. With a long tail twice as long as his height, his body covered with sharp spikes like icicles and a strong jaw that could easily snap people's limbs.

His both hands were holding a silver halberd, while the remaining two hands held a mace emitting black light and a crooked shape sheath which seems to be for a broadsword. With a breath-taking cold air, the pale blue, hardened bone armor oozed out diamond dust like bright light. His shoulders and back looked like an uplifted iceberg. He is the Guardian of Nazarick’s fifth floor, “Ice Ruler” Cocytus. His hands with the halberd knocked on the ground and the ground slowly froze around it.

“Your little game has gone too far…”

“This girl is deliberately provoking…”

“I am not—”

“Woo ahhh…” Shalltear and Aura stared at each other with sharp eyes and on the other side Mare was panicking. Momonga finally came to his senses and deliberately used a low voice to warn the two: “…Shalltear, Aura. Stop your quarrelling immediately.” They surprisingly shivered, but bowed their heads: “I'm sorry!” Momonga leisurely nodded, accepting their apologies and turned to open his mouth: “You came, Cocytus.”

“Receiving orders from Momonga-sama, of course I would come at once.” White mist drifted out from Cocytus mouth, followed by crackling sounds from the moisture in the air freezing. It was cold enough to match the flame of the Primal Fire Elemental. Just being around temperatures this low would have detrimental effects, the body could even catch frostbites. But Momonga didn’t feel anything. It should be mentioned that everyone present had fire, ice and acid resistance as a way to deal with these attacks.

“Lately there has been no intruders, it is very relaxing, right?”

“Indeed.” His jaw issued a rasping sound similar to a wasp’s intimidation, but Momonga thought that Cocytus was laughing right now. “That being said, there is something I need to do, therefore I cannot relax yet.”

“Oh? There is something you need to do? Would you tell me what it is?”

“Yes, training. It comes handy, anytime, anywhere.”

Although his appearance didn’t show it, Cocytus belonged to the warrior class. Both his personality and settings had been designed accordingly. If the Guardians were ranked by their use of weapons and attack capability, it can be said that he would be second to none.

“You’ve done all this for me right? You've worked hard.”

“It was worth working so hard, just to hear these words. Oh, Demiurge and Albedo have arrived.”

Following Cocytus sight towards the arena entrance, one could see two shadows approaching. Walking in front was Albedo, followed by someone looking like an attendant. Arriving at a certain distance from them, Albedo smiled and bowed deeply towards Momonga. The man also bowed elegantly: “I made everyone wait, I am very sorry.”

About one meter eighty tall, with a dark skin suggesting regular exposure to the sun, and partially Asian looking features with nicely combed black hair. Behind the round glasses, his eyes were so squinted they weren’t visible. It felt as if his eyes weren’t opened at all. Wearing a British suit, of course with a tie, he looked like a capable business man or professional lawyer. But even if he was dressed like a gentleman, one could still feel the sinister side he was hiding beneath it.

Behind his back was a silver tail, covered with metal plates and six long spikes at the end. Shallow black flames were constantly flickering around. This man was the ‘Infernal Prison Creator’ Demiurge, the Guardian of Nazarick’s seventh floor. This demon’s role was ‘Commander of the NPC Defenses’.

“It seems like everyone is here.”

“Momonga-sama, it seems that there are two who have not arrived yet.” A penetrating and fascinatingly deep voice came out. Demiurge’s words had a permanent special skill. This skill was called ‘Domination Mantra’ and it instantly turned people with vulnerable hearts into his puppets.

But this special ability had no effect on the people present. To have an effect, the other party must have at level of 40 or less, so for the people present it makes his voice sound quite comfortable at most. “No need. These two Guardian’s priority is only to work under certain circumstances. So far the situation does not require them to come.”

“I see.”

“…Looks like my ally has not arrived yet.” Hearing these words Shalltear and Aura instantly froze and even Albedo’s expression seemed a bit stiff. ”… Well, that guy is not only guarding me… But also guards a part of my floor.”

“Yes, true…” Shalltear exposed a stiff smile and Aura was doing the same, while Albedo constantly nodded in favor. “…The Lord of Terror. Yes, better to inform the Area Guardians as well. Ask Akaira and Gelante to inform the Area Guardians. Tasks are now given to each Floor Guardian.”

In The Great Tomb of Nazarick, the Guardians are divided into two types. The ones in front of Momonga are responsible for one or several of the floors, the Floor Guardians. The other ones were responsible for guarding the fields, special areas on each floor. In simple terms, the Area Guardians are managed by the Floor Guardians and are responsible for guarding a particular area.

There were a lot of them, so they weren’t very important. Basically, by mentioning the Guardians inside Nazarick, one usually referred to the floor Guardians. All the floor Guardians listened to Momonga’s command and after seeing them assembled, Albedo gave the opening instructions: “Everyone, please offer your loyalty to the Supreme Ruler.”

All the Guardians bowed their heads, with Momonga not even having a chance to interrupt. Everyone had started to form a line with Albedo standing in front and all Guardian arranged one after another behind her. Each Guardian was showing a serious and respectful expression. One could see that the atmosphere was serious.

Standing closest to him, Shalltear stepped forward: “First, second and third floor’s Guardian, Shalltear Bloodfallen, comes to see the Master.” On her knee, one hand on her chest and giving a deep respectful salute.

After the monarch and subject ceremony by Shalltear, Cocytus stepped forward: “The fifth floor’s Guardian Cocytus, comes to see the Master.” Like Shalltear, he kneeled in front of Momonga in a ceremonial manner. Then came the dark elf twins: “Sixth floor’s Guardian Aura Bella Fiora, comes to see the master.”

“Same… Same sixth floor’s Guardian Mare Bello Fiora, comes see the master.” Same as the others, they were kneeling and offering a respectful salute. Shalltear, Cocytus, Aura and Mare's bodies were different, so the steps they took was different, but the location of their knees was constant and neatly arranged.

Followed by Demiurge gracefully taking a step: “The seventh floor’s Guardian, Demiurge, comes to see the Master.” With a cold tone and elegant posture, Demiurge heartily salutes. Finally, Albedo took a step forward: “Guardian Commander Albedo, comes to see the Master.” Momonga smiled towards Albedo, who was kneeling like the other Guardians.

However, Albedo continued her report with her head down and in a clear voice spoke to Momonga: “Except for the 4th Floor’s Guardian Gargantua and eighth floor’s Guardian Victim, the Guardians of each floor have come to kneel down… As Master requested. We would all go through fire and water for you, without any hesitation.”

Facing six lowered heads, Momonga seemed to be unable to issue any words and his throat made a gurgling sound. An abnormal pressure shrouded this scene. What pressure… Perhaps only Momonga was feeling this way. He didn’t know what to do. This scene will probably happen only once in a lifetime.

Momonga's mind was in chaos and accidentally activated a special ability that emitted an aura, shining like a brilliant dark light. Having no time to cancel it, Momonga desperately searched his memory for a movie or TV series with this kind of scene. He wanted to find a move-like line with the current situation.

"Raise your heads." *Sa~*. Everyone raised their heads. Because the action was so neat, Momonga almost asked them if they ever practiced this together. "So… Firstly, thank you all for coming."

"Please do not thank us. I'm only Momonga-sama's loyal subordinate. Momonga-sama is our Supreme Ruler." It appeared that no other Guardian intended to deny Albedo's answer. She really is a worthy Guardian Commander. Faced with the serious looking Guardians, Momonga's throat was getting stuck and suddenly he got a kind of choking sensation. It was the pressure of being a leader, a tightly compressed physical sensation. His commands would affect the future, so he felt little hesitation about his next step. The Great Tomb of Nazarick might get ruined because of his decision and uneasiness crosses his mind.

"…Momonga-sama, feeling hesitation is quite right, because compared to Momonga-sama, our fundamental strength is insignificant." Albedo stopped smiling and spoke with a respectful and awe-inspiring expression: "As long as Momonga-sama orders it, no matter how difficult the task, I, no, all Floor Guardians will go all out, even if it means destroying ourselves. We vowed to never shame the forty-one Supreme Creators of Ainz Ooal Gown."

"This I swear!" Following Albedo's voice, the other Floor Guardians echoed in unison. All of their voices were full of strength and no matter how many people tried, nobody would be able to stop their diamond-solid loyalty and determination. Now it felt like a joke to even suspect that the NPCs might betray Momonga. After this statement, the dark mood in front of him had disappeared without a trace. Momonga was deeply moved and very excited. To think that the NPCs designed by the members of Ainz Ooal Gown would be this great.

The glorious golden age still existed. The crystallization of everyone's hard work, the masterpieces they had created still remained in this world… And Momonga was truly glad for that. Momonga wore a blooming smile, but because of his skull, there were obviously no changes in his expression. However, the red lights inside his eye sockets became extremely dazzling.

Just as his anxiety went away, Momonga simply said what a male chairman would say: "Guardians, you are the best. I'm sure you will be able to understand my purpose and achieve the mission with success. There might be some things you cannot understand, but I want you to concentrate on listening. I believe The Great Tomb of Nazarick was involved in an accident of unknown origin."

The Guardian still had serious looks on their faces and there were no signs of surprise. "Although I do not know the cause of this accident, Nazarick, which was originally in a swamp, has been transported to grasslands. Is there anyone who knows anything about this phenomenon?" Albedo looked at the floor Guardian's to see their faces and openly replied: "No, I'm sorry, we cannot think of any leads."

"Well, I have another thing to ask from the Floor Guardians. Has anything strange happened on your floor?" Hearing these words, each floor of the Guardians finally answered: "The seventh floor has not had any incidents."

"Sixth floor neither."

"Y-Yes, sister is right."

"The fifth floor is the same."

"From the first to the third floor, there hasn't been incidents."

"Momonga-sama, I want to investigate the fourth and eighth floor as soon as possible."

"So be it. Albedo will be given this task, but pay attention to the eighth floor. If there is an emergency situation, you might not be able to deal with it."

Albedo saluted with a deep bow to show her understanding and Shalltear added: "Then give me responsibility for the surface."

"No, Sebas is scouting the surface right now." Albedo, who was present at the time, shows no reaction but on the faces of the other Guardians emerges an expression of surprise that they are unable to hide. In the Great Tomb of Nazarick, there are 4 NPCs who excel in close combat.

Being the most proficient in the use of many different weapons and possessing devastating strength is Cocytus. Fully equipped with heavy armor, boasting impeccable defense is Albedo. However, the one with the most combat strength, who is able to stand against the two of them is Sebas. Other than him, there is also another who is able to beat them.

There should be no reason for the other Guardians not to be surprised. Their strongest fighter, the invincible Sebas, was sent out to do such a simple reconnaissance mission. This could be also be seen as Momonga being very cautious about the situation, therefore everyone felt especially tense. "It's about time for his return…" At that moment, Momonga saw Sebas walk towards him. Like all the other Guardians, Sebas kneeled in front of Momonga. "Momonga-sama, I apologize for being late."

"No problem, report about what you have seen on the surroundings."

Sebas raised his head and looked at the rest of the Guardians.

"…This is an emergency, it's alright to let all the Floor Guardians know."

"Yes. Firstly, the surrounding one kilometer of land is grasslands. There are no man-made structures around. Although I have seen some small creatures, there are no humans nor large creatures."

"Those small creatures, are they monsters?"

"No, they seem to be creatures without any fighting capability."

"…I see. Those grasslands you speak of, they wouldn't happen to be one of those with sharp frozen grass blades, which would pierce you as you walk by?"

"No, just normal grasslands. Nothing special."

“You also didn’t see any sky-castle like structures in the sky?”

“Yes, there were none. Whether on the sky or the ground, there were no signs of humans.”

“I see, just a simple sky… Good work Sebas.”

Momonga, consoling Sebas, felt frustrated because of the lack of any useful information. But he already felt that he was gradually aware that he was no longer in the virtual world of Yggdrasil. Although he could not understand why he could still use the equipment from Yggdrasil as well as use magic like before.

Momonga had no idea how he got to this place, but it would be better to increase the security of Nazarick for now. There was no way to know if this area was already come under control by another person, if so they will no doubt come running here to complain. No, it would be lucky if it only ended with a complaint.

“Guardians, firstly I want everyone to increase the security of each floor. Because we do not know what might happen, do not get careless. If there are any intruders, do not kill them, but instead capture them alive. Try not to harm them either. During this unknown situation, I’m sorry to trouble everyone with these requests.” The Guardians all acknowledged the order, and bowed in salute.

“Next, I want to understand under which system this organization operates. Albedo, how do the Floor Guardians exchange of information between each other under this situation?” During the time when Yggdrasil was a game, the Guardians were all just NPCs, who only acted in accordance to pre-programmed rules. They were unable to exchange information and only guarded their own floor.

“Every Guardian protects their own floor according to their own judgement, however Demiurge has general responsibility and everyone is sharing their intelligence with him.” Momonga was a little surprised, but then slowly nodded his head in satisfaction: “That’s great, Nazarick’s security is taken care of by Demiurge and the one in charge of the Guardians will be Albedo. The two of you should prepare a more comprehensive management system.”

“Understood. Planning of the management system should not include the 8th, 9th and 10th floor right?”

“The 8th floor has Victim so it should be alright. No, the 8th floor is off-limits. The order given to Albedo is also cancelled. No one is to go to the 8th floor without my permission. After the release of the seal, there will be direct access between the 7th and 9th floor. Include the inner layer of the 9th and 10th floor into the planning as well.”

“Are you sure you want to do it this way?”

Albedo was surprised and even Demiurge widened his eyes in surprise, clearly showing their inner feelings. “Is it OK to let those servants enter the holy areas of the Supreme Master? Is it really necessary to go to such great lengths?” The mentioned servants were not Ainz Ooal Gown members designed NPCs, but the system generated monsters.

Thinking about it, with the exception of a very few, the 9th and 10th floors do not have any servants. Momonga whispered to himself in a low voice. Albedo thought that there is a sanctuary there, but that is not the case.

The reason why the 9th floor had no monsters is because if the strongest NPCs on the 8th floor were defeated, then the chances of Ainz Ooal Gown winning would be very low. So they might as well play the role of the bad guys and have one final confrontation in the Throne Room. "…No problem. Because of this emergency situation, more manpower is needed."

"Understood. I will carefully select through strength and character."

Momonga nodded, then placed his eyes upon the twins: "Aura and Mare… Can you hide the Great Tomb of Nazarick? Using illusion magic, just thinking about the cost of maintaining it, what a headache."

Aura and Mare looked at each other and started thinking and after a while Mare responded: "U-Using magic is a bit difficult if you want to hide everything… But you could use mud to camouflage the walls and then cover it up with plants…"

"You say you want to use mud to dirt the great Nazarick's walls?!" Behind Mare, Albedo questioned. Although the voice was soft and sweet, the emotions behind the voice were far from it. Mare's shoulders shook, although the surrounding Guardians did not make a sound, they all showed an atmosphere of agreeing with Albedo.

For Momonga, Albedo's actions were just meddlesome, something like this was not so severe as to cause such a commotion. "Albedo… Do not interrupt. I was speaking with Mare." Momonga spoke in a low voice, surprising even himself. "Ah, I am extremely sorry, Momonga-sama!" Albedo hung her head low, face frozen with fear. The other Guardians and even Sebas stood still, acting as though the rebuke from before was intended for them.

At the Guardian's rapidly changing attitude, Momonga felt he might have gone too far with his scolding and regretted it, however he continued: "Can you really hide everything by covering the walls with mud?"

"Ye-Yes. If Momonga-sama allows it… But…"

"However, when viewed from a distance, wouldn't the ground look too unnatural? Sebas, are there any hills in the surrounding area?"

"No. The surrounding area is just flat grasslands. But there is also a night cycle here, so at night it can successfully fool others."

"I see… If it's only to hide the walls, Mare's idea may actually be a good one. Then are we able to create dirt mounds in our surroundings to properly camouflage the walls?"

"This should then make it not so obvious."

"Very good. Then Aura and Mare, the two of you will be in charge of this task. You can use items from any of the floors to complete your task. As for the part that is facing the sky and cannot be

hidden, wait until your task is finished before using the illusion magic, make it so no one can see Nazarick from the outside."

"Ye-Yes. Yes, sir."

It's fine to only think up till here. Although there may still be a lot of things to think about, we can take our time to think about it. Because from the time of the occurrence up till now, it has only been a few hours. "Alright, that is it for today. Everyone go back and rest, then start your tasks later. Because of our lack of information, try not to be too reckless." All the Guardians bowed their heads down in understanding. "Finally, there is something I want to ask all the Guardians. First Shalltear, what kind of person do you believe me to be?"

"A beautiful crystal. You are the world's most beautiful being. Even precious gems cannot be compared to your pale white body." Shalltear responded without hesitation. From the way she answered, it could have been seen as her true feelings.

"…Cocytus."

"More powerful and stronger than any Guardian. Supreme Ruler of the Great Tomb of Nazarick"

"…Aura."

"A thoughtful and compassionate person."

"…Mare."

"A-A very gentle person."

"…Demiurge."

"Both wise in judgment and quick in acting. A flawless being."

"…Sebas."

"The person responsible for gathering us all. Compassionate and refused to abandon us until the very end, in order to stay behind and fight alongside us."

"…Finally Albedo."

"The absolute ruler of us all, our greatest master and also my most loved person."

"…So it's like that. I clearly understand everyone's thinking. The responsibilities that were given to my previous companions are now all given upon you to handle. In the future, please be dedicated to your duties."

Seeing the Guardians bow their heads, Momonga used teleportation to leave the arena. Instantly the view changed from the front row of the arena to a magical array being maintained by golems. Looking around, making sure no one besides the Golems maintaining it were around, Momonga lets out a sigh. "So tiring…" Although his body was not tired, the stress to his heart felt like a huge load on his shoulders. "…Those guys… Why do they evaluate me so highly?"

Surely it must be a different person. After hearing what the Guardians thought of him, it seemed like they were just making fun of him. “Hahaha” Momonga laughed as he shook his head. From the way they looked, it felt like they were completely serious. In other words, those were their true feelings.

However, if the situation was not as much as an emergency as the Guardians thought, they might be disappointed. The thought of it gave Momonga more and more stress. Not to mention there is another problem, to which Momonga made a rather bitter expression. Although his skull is unable to show any expressions, it still feels like some changes occurred. “…How should I treat Albedo… If this goes on, I will be too ashamed to face Tabula Smaragdina-san.”

Interlude

The pressure that almost pushed their heads into the ground disappeared suddenly without a trace. Even though everyone knew that the master they needed to worship had already left, nobody stood up. After a while, someone let out a sigh of relief, and the tension was finally released. The first one to stand up was Albedo and although her white dress had dirt on it, she did not pay it any mind and just dusted it off. After seeing Albedo standing up, everyone silently followed suit.

“Si-Sister, that was scary…”

“Yeah, I thought I would be crushed.”

“As expected of Momonga-sama, even towards us Guardians, he would have such a huge effect.”

“Although I knew he’s a Supreme Being and was stronger than all of us, I did not expect it to be to this extent.” The Guardians all started talking about Momonga’s impression. The pressure that all the Guardians felt was actually the aura Momonga was emitting.

Despair Aura. In addition to the Terror effect, it is also able to reduce the stats of a player. Normally it should not affect level 100 NPCs, but due to the blessing received inside Ainz Ooal Gown, the effect became even stronger.

“That is Momonga-sama displaying his true ability as a ruler.”

“Yeah, before we announced ourselves Momonga-sama did not reveal his true abilities, but once we assumed our roles as Guardians, he displayed just a fraction of his true powers.”

“In response to our loyalty, Momonga-sama will show a true ruler’s strength.”

“Indeed.”

“When he was together with us, he did not let out his aura. Momonga-sama is really thoughtful, when he saw that we were thirsty, he took out something for us to drink.”

Because of Aura's words, a sudden tension fills the room. Albedo was the most affected, her hands constantly trembling, feeling as if her nails would split her gloves. Slightly shaking, Mare widened his eyes: “Th-That is the true strength of the ruler of the Great Tomb of Nazarick, truly amazing!”

The atmosphere of the room instantly changed. “Absolutely correct. Responding to our thoughts and showing his power as a ruler… As expected of our creator. Standing at the top of the 41 Creators, but also to be the only one to stay until the end, our compassionate master.”

Listening to Albedo’s speech, all the Guardians showed expressions of worship. While Mare just had a look of relief on his face. Nothing would be able to make them happier than witnessing the

true power of the 41 Creators who created them and who they swore to serve with absolute loyalty.

Not just the Guardians, but any creature that was created by a superior being, their greatest joy would be to assist their creator, then finally receive his honest recognition. It is a fundamental truth. To those whose original purpose was to serve their creator, this could not make them happier. Breaking the pleasant and relaxing atmosphere, Sebas spoke: "Then I will take my leave, although I do not know where Momonga-sama has gone, it is only natural that I go to his side."

Even though Albedo showed an expression of envy, she suppressed that emotion and answered: "Of course Sebas. Serve Momonga-sama properly and do not disrespect him. If any situation arises come back and report to me. Especially if Momonga-sama calls for me, drop any other matters and immediately report back to me!"

Hearing those words, Demiurge showed a troubled expression. "…If Momonga-sama wishes to summon me to the bedroom, please tell him that I require a bit of time to properly prepare myself. However, it is also fine if he wants me to immediately proceed to his room. My body is always kept in perfect condition and I always selected the best of clothes, so as to respond quickly to Momonga-sama's calls. In short, I place Momonga-sama's summons as a top priority—"

"I understand, Albedo. However, I must take my leave, wasting any more time here would be rude to Momonga-sama. Therefore, to the rest of the Guardians, I will take my leave." Having said that, Sebas took quick steps and left the Arena, leaving before Albedo could say anything else. "Anyways… It sure is quiet. What happened to you Shalltear?" Hearing Demiurge, the rest of the Guardians look at Shalltear, only to realize her still kneeling on the floor.

"What's wrong, Shalltear?" Shalltear slowly lifted her head in response. Misty eyed and looking as though she just woke up. "…What happened?"

"After feeling Momonga-sama's imposing attitude, I couldn't help but feel… Excited down there." …Silence… Everyone did not know what to say. All of the Guardians knew that the one with the most sexual fetishes among them is Shalltear, one of which was necrophilia, thus they could only slap their foreheads in disbelief.

However, Mare did not understand the situation and was confused. There was another person among the Guardians who did not want to let matters rest. That would be Albedo. With jealous feelings Albedo exclaimed: "This slut."

Hearing those words of hostility, Shalltear raised her head to reveal a flirtatious smile: "Ah? Having felt the power of our one most powerful master, Momonga-sama, is truly rewarding. Those who didn't get wet are those with the problem. Don't tell me you are just acting innocent and did not feel any lust? You big mouthed starfish."

"…You lampetra." The two of them stared at each other. Although the surrounding Guardians knew that they would not start exchanging blows, they still stared with eyes full of anxiety. "The creator was the one who determined my likeness, towards my own appearance I have no complaints."

"It is the same for me." Shalltear slowly raised herself, and the both of them slowly walked towards each other. Never breaking eye contact until both of them stood in front of each other. "Don't think that since you are the one in charge of the Guardians that you can stay beside Momonga-sama and think you have won. If you really think that way, then everyone would laugh their teeth off."

"Ah. Of course, once you've been exiled to a far border, then I will take the opportunity to obtain complete victory."

"…What is this complete victory, teach me, O' great leader-sama."

"As a slut, you should be very clear on what that means."

Although the two of them were intensely insulting one another, they never broke eye contact. They just blankly stared at each other. Snap! Albedo threateningly unfolded her wings. Not to be outdone, Shalltear began to emit out a black mist.

"Ah… Aura, problems with women should be left to women to resolve. If anything happens, I will come down to stop it, during that time please come and find me."

"Wait a minute, Demiurge! You plan to leave this to me?"

Waving his hand, Demiurge left the two of them behind. Cocytus and Mare also left, since no one wanted to be involved in this. "Really… Is there any need to quarrel?"

"I myself am very interested in the results."

"What results, Demiurge?"

"The results determining the military strength and future of the Great Tomb of Nazarick."

"What do you mean Demiurge?"

"Well…"

Thinking about his answer to Mare. He had a passing thought of wanting to impart some adult knowledge to the naive Mare, but decided against it. Although Demiurge was of the demon race, which was thought to be both cruel and cold, that would only apply to those demons found outside of Nazarick. As for the ones created by the 41 Creators, Demiurge was loyal to them and thought of them as important companions.

"Great rulers require heirs' right? Even though Momonga-sama stayed until the end, if there comes a day where he loses interest in us, he will leave us like the rest of his companions. At that time, it is important to leave an heir for us to pledge loyalty to."

"Of course. But who is Momonga-sama's heir?"

"That type of thinking would be too disrespectful. Our duty is to ensure that we protect Momonga-sama such that he is able to properly continue to stay here, and to avoid any kind of unfortunate incidents right?"

Demiurge interrupted Cocytus: "Of course I understand Cocytus. However, do you not want Momonga-sama to leave an heir behind for us to pledge loyalty to?"

"Well… I really would love to be able to pledge my loyalty to his heir…" An image of Momonga's heir floated into the head of Cocytus. Not only that, teaching him swordsmanship in order to protect himself, listening to the orders of a grown up young master. "…Ah, that's really great. A really beautiful scene… Sensei… Sensei…"

Seeing Cocytus enjoying himself, imagining turning into a successful Sensei to Momonga's heir, Demiurge could not take it from him and looked away from him: "In addition, regarding the plan to strengthen Nazarick, I am also very interested. I want to know how far our kids can go. How about it Mare, do you want to have children?"

"Uh? Huh?"

"However, that is impossible without a partner… If you find any humans, dark elves or wood elves, could you please capture them?"

"Eh? Ehhh?" Mare briefly nodded: "I-, If this helps Momonga-sama… Then I will do it. But how are children born?"

"Well, when it comes to that time I will teach you. If you decide to experiment on your own, Momonga-sama will probably scold you. Due to maintaining the Great Tomb of Nazarick's operating cost, it should be better if we try to maintain the balance first."

"Th-, that is correct. I heard that the servants underneath are spawned using a very precise calculation… If I just randomly increase the amount I might get scolded. I-, I don't want to be scolded by Momonga-sama…"

"I also do not want to incur his wrath… If only we could set up a ranch on the outside of Nazarick…"[2]

Thinking about it, Demiurge asked Mare a question which no one had teased him about before: "Come to think of it, Mare, why do you dress like a girl?" Hearing Demiurge, Mare pulled on his skirt in an attempt to cover his legs. "This is because of Bukubuku Chagama-sama. She said this is called 'a trap', I am very sure of it."

"Ah… So it Bukubuku Chagama-sama's idea. Well with your body it should be no problem… But do youngsters usually dress like this?"

"Of t-that I'm not too sure."

Although the 41 Creators are no longer present, they had no choice but to obediently follow their commands. In fact, in all of the Great Tomb of Nazarick, Mare's clothes are actually the most proper, and only someone of equal rank and status to the creators are able to change his dress.

"…Then we should talk to Momonga-sama about this. Perhaps we can make every youngster around dress like this… Cocytus should be almost be done with his fantasies." Hearing the words

[2] Author: Demon–Human livestock breeding ranch.

of his colleague, Cocytus showed a smile full of satisfaction. “What a beautiful scene… Truly a beautiful sight.”

“I see, that is great… Are Albedo and Shalltear still arguing?” Still glaring at each other, the one to answer Demiurge was the tired Aura: “They… were already done. But now they are arguing about… The problem about who is the first wife.”

“For the ruler of the Great Tomb of Nazarick to have only one concubine would be strange. The only problem is who is qualified to be the first wife…”

“…Although this interesting, we should discuss it at another time. Alright, Albedo shouldn’t you give us your orders? There are still many problems to address.”

“Yes, you’re right. We must quickly organize ourselves. Shalltear, let us postpone our discussion right now since we have more pressing matters at hand.”

“I have no objections, Albedo. This matter will surely take a long time to discuss.”

“Very well. Then I will start the development of the next plan.”

Seeing her resume her role as the person in charge, the Guardians all bowed their head in salute, but did not kneel. Even though they pay respect to Albedo as their commander, they will not kneel to her. During the creation of the Guardians, the 41 creators ranked Albedo the highest and gave her command over all the other Guardians.

As long as she is the one in charge, every Guardian will comply with her orders and show her the courtesy of saluting her. Albedo doesn’t mind this kind of treatment since she believes this is the proper way. “First of all…”

第三章 卡恩村之戰

Chapter 3: Battle of Carne village

Part 1

The dress room inside Momonga's chambers was filled with all kind of different items, almost reaching the point of running out of space. From cloaks to other things, Momonga could find all kinds of equipment and items here. Sometimes he had bought body armor, but after they became useless to him they were just stored in here. Not only armor, also weapons ranging from staves to swords, there was no shortage of anything.

By killing Monsters in Yggdrasil, data crystals would drop. These crystals could be attached to items afterwards and countless original items could be created this way. If there was an awesome item for sale, many people would be unable to help themselves and buy it. As a result, that was the state this room has become.

From the variety of weapons in the room, Momonga freely picks a sword. Because there is no fitting scabbard, the silver blade shines brightly in the light. Engraved on the sword's blade were text-like symbols and because of the reflected light they were easy to see. Momonga picked it up and waved it around. It was light as a feather.

This was certainly not because the sword was made of a very light material, but because of Momonga's immense strength. Because Momonga is a magician, his magic related stats were high but his stats for physical fitness were comparatively low. But after reaching level one hundred, he accumulated a lot of strength status points through training, which shouldn't be underestimated. If he encountered a low level monster, he easily dealt with it by using only his staff.

Momonga slowly assumed a stance with the sword, but the sound of a hard metal percussion could immediately be heard inside. The sword Momonga was wielding in his hand just now falls on the floor. The maids in the room came over immediately to pick up the sword from the ground and present it to Momonga.

However, Momonga did not take it and was instead staring at his empty hands. This is it. This made Momonga confused. If the living NPC's behavior, words and deeds made people think that the life in this world is not a game, then what about the shackles of the body. It has yet to make people feel tired of living in the game.

In Yggdrasil, it was impossible for someone like Momonga, who never picked a warrior based class, to equip a Sword. But if this world became the real world, being unable to use a sword should be impossible. Momonga shook his head and decided to stop brooding over this matter. In the absence of sufficient information, no matter how much he searched, he wouldn't find an answer.

"Clean up." The maids followed Momonga's instructions and he turns around to look at a wall which was almost entirely covered with mirrors, showing a skeleton wearing clothes. Seeing how their own familiar body turned into this alien form should cause a dreadful feeling.

However, Momonga feels completely indifferent and that didn't even feel weird to him. Because he played Yggdrasil before, he was already familiarized with his current appearance, but there was also another reason for his calmness. Just like his outer appearances, it appeared that his mental faculties had been affected as well.

First, there were his emotions: as soon as he experienced strong emotions, they would be immediately put aside in order to calm him down, it was almost like something was repressing them. Another point was his lack of any kind of desire, be it hunger or sleep. At first there seemed to be a sexual appetite, but even after touching Albedo's soft chest, there wasn't any additional impulse. Feeling as if he lost something very important, Momonga couldn't help but look at his waist: "Since there is no actual use… Will it disappear?"

Becoming slightly emotional, he starts to utter this out of frustration, but before he could finish half of his sentence, that feeling completely vanished. Momonga believed these changes to be extremely useful, particularly his mental changes. Perhaps an undead is completely resistant to spiritual attacks. Although now Momonga possessed an undead body and mind, he was still a human deep inside.

Because of that, there would be moments when he experienced emotions, but the moment those emotions became too strong, they would be repressed instantly. Momonga was afraid that he would lose all his emotion in the future if he continued to stay within his undead body. Of course, it wouldn't be a big deal if that happened, because no matter what the world was like, the way Momonga saw himself would not change. Besides, there were also NPCs like Shalltear around. Maybe being undead was not the cause for this, even if it was too soon to say.

"「Create Greater Item」." After casting the spell, his body was instantly covered by a full set of plate armor. The armor was made of steel with a black matte lustre and covered with gold and purple decorations, giving it a very expensive appearance. After wearing it, Momonga moved a bit to check. Although his body felt some pressure, the armor was not restricting his movement. The armor was fitting very well and covered every part of his body, making it impossible for any of his bones to be visible.

If it was magically created equipment Momonga was able to equip it, just like in Yggdrasil. Momonga admired this great magic, his reflection of wearing the full-faced helmet gave him the look of a majestic warrior, and he didn't look like a magician at all. Momonga nodded his head in satisfaction, swallowing his non-existent saliva. With a mischievous and innocent look, Momonga said: "I'm going out for a bit."

"The guards are ready at any time." The maid immediately answered out of reflex. But… *This is starting to get really annoying.* On the first day of being followed by guards, he felt rather oppressed; on the second day, he started getting used to it and wanted to show off with his guards, but when it came to the third day… Momonga could not help but let out a sigh.

No matter where he went, his bodyguards were following him. Additionally, people would bow whenever they met him. This feeling was just too heavy. He would be able to endure it if he could just casually walk around with his guards. But that was impossible. Because he had to maintain his role as ruler of the Great Tomb of Nazarick, he couldn't show the slightest amount of weakness, so it was nerve-wracking.

For an ordinary person like Momonga, this was extremely exhausting. Even if any of his strong emotional outbursts was immediately suppressed, they still made him feel as if he was burnt by a small flame. Especially with incredibly beautiful women following him and not leaving his side, all the while taking meticulous care of him. As a man he would obviously feel happy, but there was still the problem of his privacy being invaded.

This mental fatigue was also part of his human side. As the ruler of the Great Tomb of Nazarick, it would be very dangerous if he was caught up in an emergency situation while being mentally exhausted. During a key moment, he might make a fatal mistake. He needed to relax a little. After coming to this conclusion, Momonga opened his eyes. Although his expression didn't change, the fire within his eyes grew stronger.

"No need… I don't want anyone to follow me, I just want to walk on my own."

"Please wait, in the case that Momonga-sama encounters any trouble, we must act as your shield, we absolutely cannot let anything happen to Momonga-sama." It would be too heartless to ignore their feelings of wanting to sacrifice their lives in order to protect their master who just wanted to have a relaxing walk.

However, it has been three days since the occurrence of the abnormal situation, which would amount to at least 72 hours. During all this time, Momonga has been trying to maintain his dignity as ruler of the Great Tomb of Nazarick, and his heart was eager to rest.

So although he felt sorry for them, Momonga had already prepared an excuse: "…I have something secret to attend to, so I won't allow anyone following me." A brief silence. Momonga felt like a long period of time passed, then the maid finally answered: "Yes, Momonga-sama. Please take care."

Looking at the maid who believed his excuse, Momonga felt bad about his deception but he decided to just ignore that feeling. Nothing should go wrong if he took a little break. First, he would go and see the outside scenery for himself. Yes, he had to confirm with his own eyes if it was possible to go to other places, this was extremely important. The real reason why Momonga invented more and more excuses was because he felt that his current behavior was too selfish.

Shaking off his feelings of guilt, Momonga activated the power of his ring. The place he was sent to was a huge plaza. Nearby were multiple slender stone tables that were meant for corpses, but right now there were none. The floor was covered with brightly polished limestone and behind Momonga was a staircase leading downwards, ending in front of a large gate leading to the first floor of the Great Tomb of Nazarick.

The walls didn't have any torches, the only source of light came from the blue and white light from the moon. Using the power of the ring of Ainz Ooal Gown, it was possible to instantly teleport to the place closest to the surface, the ground floor of the Great Tomb of Nazarick, the Central Shrine.

With just a few steps it was possible for him to walk outside. Although his destination was just in front of him, Momonga did not move because he encountered an unexpected situation. Momonga saw several unusual figures. There were three different types of monsters, four of each, totaling up to 12 of them. One of them looked like a terrifying demon, it had a scaly body and fangs protruded

out of his mouth, it also had long sharp claws on its stout arms. In front of it snake-like tail was a pair of burning wings, giving it the appearance of a devil.

Another one was a female monster with a black crow head wearing skin-tight leather equipment. The last monster was wearing armor that exposed its chest, showing off his chest and strong abs. If it wasn't for the black bat wings on his back and the two horns coming out from his temples, you would be unable to tell if it was a monster or not. Although it looked like a handsome man, from his eyes one could see an insatiable desire.

Their names were Demon of Wrath, Demon of Jealousy and Demon of Greed. All of the demons looked at Momonga, unmoving, only staring at him intensely. A serious gaze that would make people feel pressure. They were monsters around level 80, who spawned in Demiurge's realm of the Underground Volcano, near the door to the 8th floor with the responsibility of guarding it.

Normally the duty of guarding the ground floor would fall to Shalltear's undead soldiers. Why would Demiurge's soldiers be here? A shadow appeared next to the monsters, although unseen in the beginning, a devil appeared. With his appearance, the puzzle was finally solved. "Demiurge…" Being called, the devil let out a surprised look.

That look could be viewed as asking "why was my master here" or "who was this mysterious monster?" Momonga bet on that possibility and moved forward. If he had stopped moving, it would be strange if his true identity was not found out. For now, he continued to walk towards the wall, intent on ignoring those demons and walking past them.

Their eyes focused on his body, but Momonga used his willpower to repress his emotions of cowardice, he stood tall and moved on. When the distance between the two sides is gradually narrowing down, all the demons went down on one knee to greet him. The person standing in front of the saluting party is of course Demiurge. The movement is quite neat and elegant, as if he was the incarnation of a prince.

"Momonga-sama. What are you doing here all alone, without bringing your guards? And also changing into this kind of attire…" The secret got immediately exposed. Demiurge could be considered as the one having the highest wisdom inside the Great Tomb in Nazarick, so being seen through by him was understandable.

But Momonga thinks that the reason that Demiurge saw through his disguise was due to the fact that Momonga had teleported here. The only person in Nazarick who could freely use teleport, was the only owner of an Ainz Ooal Gown ring — Momonga.

"Ah… There are many reasons. If it's Demiurge, you should know why I am dressed like this." Demiurge made a complicated expression. After a few breaths he said: "Forgive me, I do not understand Momonga-sama's intentions—"

"Call me Black Knight."

"Black Knight-sama…" Demiurge looked like he wanted to say something, but Momonga decided to ignore it. Even though the name sounded very modest, compared to the names of the monsters in the game, this name was very normal.

There was a reason as to why he wanted Demiurge to correct himself. Although Demiurge's servants were the only ones present, this place was originally a gateway, there should be many different servants passing by. In order to not to let them know that he was Momonga, he wanted to avoid mentioning this name. It was unclear how much of his intentions Demiurge understood. At that moment, Demiurge suddenly looked as if he had a revelation.

"I see… So that's what's going on."

Huh? What? Momonga could not help wondering. Momonga was unable to guess how much the intelligent Demiurge was able to understand. He could only let out non-existent sweat from under his full-faced helmet, hoping that he would at least be able to see through his intentions.

"Momon-… Black Knight-sama's profound insight, I finally have a slight grasp on it. This is surely a worthy problem for a ruler. But as to the issue of you having no companions with you, I cannot idly sit by. Although I know doing this would cause some problems, but I hope that you will mercifully allow us to follow you."

"…There's really no helping it. Then I will allow just one person."

Demiurge let out an elegant smile. "I am grateful that Black Knight-sama would grant my willful request."

"…Just call me Black Knight, no need for any honorifics."

"How could we! I absolutely will not allow addressing you in this way. Of course, if it was some kind of undercover work, or some kind of very special task or command, I could obey this command, but in the Great Tomb of Nazarick, there is no one would dare to address you in this way Momonga-sama… No, Black Knight-sama!"

Hearing Demiurge's passionate speech, Momonga felt moved, and could not help but nod. In his heart he thought that calling himself Black Knight would cause other people to make fun of him for choosing such a stupid name and he started to regret choosing this name. "I'm sorry, Momon… Black Knight-sama, I have taken up your valuable time. Then the rest of you will be on standby, on the way back tell the others I will be leaving for the outside."

"Yes sir, Demiurge-sama."

"The servants also approve. Come Demiurge, let's go." Momonga passed the bowing Demiurge. Raising his head, Demiurge followed after.

"Why is Momon… *cough*, Black Knight-sama dressed in this way?"

"Don't know, but there should be some reason." The confused demons who were left behind asked. It was not because of Momonga teleporting; they actually saw through him. Although Momonga was unable to detect it, everyone inside the Great Tomb of Nazarick, no, everyone inside Ainz Ooal Gown emitted a special kind of presence which the servants used to determine if another person was an ally or not.

Furthermore, the original 41 rulers of the Great Tomb of Nazarick, of which only Momonga was left, had a special presence that enveloped their whole bodies, allowing the servants to know

immediately who their rulers were. They would be able to sense such an incredibly strong presence no matter how far away it was. Even though Momonga covered his whole body in plate armor, they would never confuse him with somebody else. His aura was even easier to distinguish compared to others.

Someone was climbing up the staircase leading to the first floor of Nazarick. Judging from the aura coming from the direction of the stairs, it could be determined that it was a Floor Guardian. Walking up the stairs and coming into sight was the beautiful face of the Commander of the Guardians, Albedo.

Seeing that they were in front of Demiurge's direct superior, the demons all knelt down. For Albedo, the sight of them kneeling down was natural and as if she did not see them, she began to scan her surroundings. Being unable to find what she was looking for, Albedo moved towards the demons and questioned them. "…I do not see Demiurge, where has he gone?"

"That… Just now Black Knight-sama came, so Demiurge has followed him outside."

"Black Knight… sama? I have never heard of that name… Demiurge went with that person? A dignified Guardian follow him out? Isn't that too weird?"

The demons did not know what to do, and could not help but face forward. Albedo looked at the demons with a warm smile. "Would a mere servant dare to hide something from me?" Her warm and gentle warning made them shudder with fear and the demons were unable to continue hiding the truth. "Demiurge-sama has determined that Black Knight-sama is actually the person we serve."

"…Momonga-sama was here!" Albedo squeaked and the demons calmly replied: "…No, that person's name is Black Knight-sama."

"…What about the guards? Did Demiurge receive instructions from Momonga-sama? But I had already made an appointment with him and Demiurge couldn't have known that Momonga-sama was coming here, right? Forget it, let's put this aside. First, I have to get some clothes ready and take a bath!"

Albedo touched her own clothes. Working around the clock had made her clothes dirty, her wings and tail were also looking disheveled. However, even if a peerless beauty like Albedo became a little dirty, it would not diminish her good looks in any way. It was like having a million points reduced by a single point, it was no big deal and had no discernible effect on her beauty. But for Albedo, this kind of thing was unacceptable and she wouldn't allow the one she loved to see her this way.

"The closest bathroom… Would be at where Shalltear is? I will be met with some suspicion… But I should be able to bear with it for now. You there, go to my room and bring me some clothes! Quickly!" At this moment, one of the demon's addressed the departing Albedo. That demon would be the Demon of Jealousy. "…Albedo-sama, I mean no disrespect, but wouldn't your current attire be good?"

"…What did you say?" Albedo stopped and angrily answered. She believed that the demon wanted her to look dirty when she goes to see Momonga.

"…No, I just thought that Albedo-sama is such a beautiful lady, if you were to show that you have been working hard at carrying out his orders, you would give a more favorable impression. In the end, it would be more advantageous to Albedo-sama right?"

The other demons also recommended: "By the time that Albedo-sama finishes showering and getting dressed to appear in front of Momonga-sama… Black Knight-sama, who knows how much time will pass. To miss such an opportunity, wouldn't it be a pity?"

"Hmm—", Albedo was deep in thought. What they said was not wrong. "That makes sense… Maybe it's because it has been a long time since I last panicked. I can only see Momonga-sama after 18 hours, don't you think 18 hours is too long?"

"Yes, it is too long."

"Wanting to establish an operating organization as soon as possible and return to Momonga-sama's side… No more loitering around, I need to go and find Momonga-sama quickly. Where is he now?"

"He just left through that door."

"Here?" Although Albedo answered coldly, her face showed a shy smile and she cutely flapped her wings at the opportunity to see Momonga. She quickly stepped past the demons. Then the footsteps suddenly stopped, Albedo asked the demons again: "I'll ask again: going to see Momonga-sama like this will improve his impression of me?"

♦ ♦ ♦

Leaving the shrine, a beautiful scene greeted Momonga. The Great Tomb of Nazarick had an area of about 200 square meters. It was surrounded by six-meter thick walls for protection with an entrance in the front and the back. The grass in the cemetery was kept short, giving it a refreshing atmosphere. But on the other hand, the cemetery had large leafy trees, covering the whole area in shade, creating a gloomy feeling. There were also many white tombstones lying about in a messy arrangement.

Properly trimmed grass and the disorderly tombstones created a strong sense of disparity. Not only that, but the area was also dotted with the fine carvings of angels and goddesses, along with other artworks. But one couldn't help looking down on the chaotic design of this cemetery. Also, excluding the four small shrines in the four corners of the cemetery, there was a huge central shrine with a six-meter high statue of a warrior being protected by soldiers.

It was from the Central Shrine of the Great Tomb of Nazarick that Momonga came out of. Momonga stood at the top of the board stone steps and quietly overlooked the scenery. The Great Tomb of Nazarick was located at Helheim, which was a cold world with a never ending night. Because of the eternal night, the atmosphere was quite dark and the sky would always be covered with dark clouds.

But the scenery today was different. In front of his eyes was the beautiful night sky. Momonga looked at the sky, and let out a sigh full of emotion, constantly shaking his head as he could not believe what he was seeing. "To be able to do this in a virtual world… It truly is amazing… The air

here is fresh and there is no trace of contamination in the atmosphere. People who are born into this world wouldn't need artificial lungs or hearts…"

He has never seen such a clear sky. Momonga wanted to cast magic, but was hindered by the armor he was wearing. Certain magic related classes had special skills and being able to cast while wearing armor was one of them, but Momonga never learned that skill. So the full body armor that he was wearing hindered his ability to cast spells. Even if it was armor that was created with magic, it still did not have the advantage of being able to cast spells while wearing it.

While wearing the armor, there were only five types of spells that could be casted. Sadly, the spell Momonga wanted to use was not one of these five types. Momonga extended his hand into empty air and took out an accessory. It was a necklace in the shape of a bird's wings. Wearing the necklace, he focused his awareness onto the necklace, activating the power hidden inside.

"「Flight」." Casting off the shackles of gravity, Momonga slowly floated up into the sky. He continued to speed up, raising upwards in a straight line in one breath. Although Demiurge hurriedly chased after him, Momonga paid him no mind, and continued to rise. Unknowingly he has risen up several hundred meters.

Then Momonga slowly decelerated and took off his helmet, he was speechless. No, looking at this world he became speechless. The bluish white light from the moon and stars drove away the darkness on the ground. Blowing in the breeze, the swaying grasslands looked like a shining world. The countless stars in the sky along with the moon and planets gave off a brilliant radiance, complementing the scenery on the ground. Momonga could not help but sigh: "Beautiful… No, too beautiful for words… I have no idea what kind of face Blue Planet-san would make if he saw this…"

If he saw a world with no air, water or soil pollution. Momonga thought about his companion, thinking about when he appeared on the net, he was praised as a romantic, on his face that looked like a rock showed a smile, a warm and gentle man who loved the night sky. No, what he loved was nature. He loved natured even though it would be polluted and had to disappear. Because he wanted to admire a scenery that no longer existed in reality, he started playing Yggdrasil. He also spent a lot of his time and hard work on crafting and designing the sixth floor, especially the night sky, thereby creating his ideal world.

For such a nature loving person, it was especially exciting when it came down to talking about nature. It almost went to the point of over-enthusiasm. If he saw this world, there would be no telling how excited he would be, or how deep or passionate the discussion would be like. Momonga who really wanted to hear the profound knowledge of his old friend, Blue Planet, whom he missed greatly. He slightly turned to his side. Of course there was no one next to him. It was impossible.

Momonga heard the sound of flapping wings, and the changing shape of Demiurge entered his eyes. From his back was a pair of wet looking, black wings. His face also went from human to a frog like face. This was Demiurge's half demon form. Some of the heteromorphic races classes can transform into several different forms. In Nazarick, both Sebas and Albedo have different forms.

Although it was troublesome to learn these unusual racial forms, they had been popular for a long time because one could be like a final boss with several forms from different heteromorphic races.

A lot of people liked these unusual races, but having settings like pure human or half human had some weaknesses, while playing as a heteromorphic race gave special abilities.

Momonga looked away from the transformed Demiurge and back to the stars in the sky, like speaking to friends who were not here Momonga sighed: "…Even just relying on the moon and the stars I can see the scenery… It's hard to believe this is really the real world. Blue Planet-san… The sky is really shining like a jewelry box."

"Perhaps that is so. This world's beauty must surely be precious stones created just for the sake of decorating Momon— Black Knight-sama."

Demiurge gave out words of flattery. The sudden speech seemed to have come from his partner's strange delusions, made Momonga feel a little angry. However, looking at a scenery like this, the anger soon disappeared. Moreover, after looking down on the world he felt as if it was very small. In his heart he started to think that continuing to act like an evil Overlord was a pretty good idea. "It is truly beautiful. These stars were meant to decorate me eh… Perhaps it is so. I will leave my body here, in order to obtain this jewel box that belongs to no one."

Momonga extended his hand in front of him and clenched his fist. The stars in the sky seemed to fall into his hand. Of course, it was because the stars were being blocked by his hand. Momonga shrugged at his childish behavior, turned towards Demiurge and said: "…No, this isn't something that I alone should have. Perhaps it should be used to decorate the Great Tomb of Nazarick, the Ainz Ooal Gown of me and my friends."

"…A truly awe-inspiring speech. If you wish, I will immediately bring the armies of Nazarick and take this jewel box. Presenting this gift to my beloved Momonga-sama, would be Demiurge's greatest honor." Towards Demiurge's grand act, Momonga softly smiled. Thinking about whether Demiurge is also immersed in this atmosphere.

"For now we do not know what kinds of creatures live in this world, so I can only point out the fallacy of your idea. Our presence here is extremely small. However, conquering the world is a very interesting idea." Conquering the world would be something only the bad guys who appear in children's television shows would say.

In fact, it wouldn't be easy to conquer the world. Problems would also arise if one does conquer the world, since law and order had to be maintained to prevent rebellion, there had to be unity between the countries and so on. Just by thinking about some of these things, the idea of actually conquering the world would quickly lose its appeal.

Although Momonga was fully aware of these things, he still spoke about of wanting to conquer the world. Because after seeing the beauty of this world, his childish desires were triggered by it. Also, because of having to maintain his act of the leader of the notorious Ainz Ooal Gown, he accidentally let out some childish lines in addition, there was another reason.

"…Ulbert-san, Luci★Fer-san, Variable Talisman-san, Beruriba-san…" More than once he remembered jokingly saying to his guild members "together we will conquer the world of Yggdrasil". He knew that Demiurge was the smartest person in Nazarick, so he should understand that the talk about conquering the world was just some childish nonsense. Had Momonga known what kind of expression the frog-faced Demiurge was making, the conversation

wouldn't have ended there. Momonga did not look at Demiurge, just staring at the horizon where the earth met the sky.

"…An unknown world. But in this world… Is there only me? Did the other guild members also come here?" Although it was impossible to create a second character in Yggdrasil, for those who had already left the game it was possible to create a new character just to come back for the last day. It was also possible that Herohero had returned during the moment the server was supposed to shut down.

In conclusion, Momonga living here was an abnormal situation. If this was caused by some unknown phenomenon, then others who were still playing the game could have been stranded in this world, just like him. Although he could not contact them using 'Message', it could be due to many other factors. For example, being on a different continent, or some kind of magical effect.

"…If it's like this… If I let the whole world know about the name Ainz Ooal Gown…" If there were any of his companions around, they might hear about it. And they would surely come. Momonga was convinced about the friendship between them. Immersed in his thoughts, Momonga suddenly turned to look at Nazarick, and was met with an impressive sight.

The ground around about one hundred meters of Nazarick were generating huge wave of soils similar to ocean waves. The plains slowly began to grown into little bulges and moved slowly in a certain direction. They began to gather together, finally becoming a small hill closing in on Nazarick. The mounds of soil pounded against the walls of Nazarick, crushing them, like waves of a tsunami hitting from all directions.

"…'Land of Waves'. Looks like he's not only using his technical skills, but to also his class skills to increase the area of effect…" Momonga admired quietly. In Nazarick, there was only one person capable of such magic. *As expected of Mare. Looks like leaving the task of hiding the walls to him was a good choice after all.*

"Yes, in addition to Mare, the tireless undead and golems are also helping. But the progress is too slow and not good enough. After moving the earth there will be many depressions where plants would have to be placed in order to hide them. This will further increase Mare's workload…"

"…Hiding the walls of Nazarick should take a very long time, the problem is whether or not we will be discovered during the construction. How is the security situation around here?"

"The beginning stages of the early warning systems have already completed. If there are any intelligent biological invasions, we would know immediately while keeping the intruder unaware of the situation."

"Good work. But… These early warning systems are also done by the servants?"

After receiving Demiurge's confirmation, just in case, Momonga felt the construction of another alert network would be appropriate. "…About the construction of the system, I have an idea. Please build it like this."

"Yes sir. After consulting with Albedo, we will combine our efforts. Yes, Black Knight-sama—"

"Enough, Demiurge. Calling me Momonga is fine."

“Understood… May I ask what Momonga-sama’s next schedule is?”

“I plan to visit Mare and provide him with a suitable reward for accomplishing his task perfectly…” Demiurge let out a smile. It was a gentle smile, completely different from something one would expect of a demon.

“To receive appreciation directly from Momonga-sama would already be a great reward… This… Many apologies, but I suddenly thought of something that I need to take care of. As for Mare’s location…”

“No problem. You may leave, Demiurge.”

“Many thanks, Momonga-sama.” Once Demiurge started to fly away, Momonga also started to float down to the ground, and once again donned his helmet. Located at his destination was a Dark Elf, who noticed something and tilted his head to look up to the sky…

Seeing Momonga he was shocked. Waiting for Momonga to land, Mare hurriedly ran over. His skirt fluttering in the wind. A little bit could be seen. No, Momonga totally did not want to see, he was just curious about what was worn underneath.

“Momo-Momonga-sama, it is an honor for you to come here.”

“Eh… Mare there is no need to be afraid, just take it slow. If you are not used to it, you do not need to be so formal… Of course it’s only in private.”

“Th-That cannot be done, how I could not use honorifics to address you… Even my sister would never do so. That would be too rude.” Although he did not like children to treat him so respectfully… “So it’s like that, Mare. If you insist then I have no objections. However, I want you to know that I never forced you to do so.”

“Ye-, Yes! Spe-, speaking of which, Momonga-sama why have you come here? Ha-, have I perhaps done something wrong…”

“Nothing of the sort Mare. I came here to reward you.”

Mare’s expression went from worry and fear from being scolded, to becoming surprised. “The job that Mare currently has is extremely important, because the people of this world could have an average level of 100 or more. If there are those kinds of opponents, even with the alert network, it will also be necessary to hide the Great Tomb of Nazarick from preying eyes. This is an important matter.” Mare constantly nodded in agreement.

“So Mare, I wanted you to know that the way you are doing your job is perfect and satisfies me. Entrusting this job to you, makes me feel at ease.” Something that Momonga learnt from his experiences in society, is that superiors must praise the hard work of outstanding subordinates.

The Guardians all gave Momonga high evaluations, so in order to maintain their loyalty, Momonga must also assess them highly on their job. If the Guardians and NPCs that the guild created, felt betrayed and disappointed after trying to maintain a perfect performance, it would be Momonga’s failure as a leader. That was why he always had to pay attention, and maintain the attitude of a ruler in front of them.

"…You can understand my thoughts right, Mare?"

"Yes! Momonga-sama!" Although he was wearing female clothing, looking at Mare's tense face you could clearly see he was male. "Very good, then for your excellent work, I want to give you a reward."

"H-How can I! This is my duty!"

"…According to your work performance, it is only proper to present you with a reward."

"No, no! Our sole reason to exist is to serve the Supreme Ruler, so our hard work is the most natural thing to do!"

With such a back and forth discussion, the opinions will never intersect, so Momonga came up with a compromise. "How about this. Giving you this reward, I also hope that you will continue to be loyal to me, that way there shouldn't be a problem, right?"

"Is, is there really no problem?"

With a strong attitude Momonga took out the reward… It was a ring.

"Momo-Momonga-sama… You took the wrong thing!"

"No."

"Wrong! That is the ring of Ainz Ooal Gown, only the Supreme Rulers can hold it! I cannot possibly accept such a thing." Mare trembled at the unexpected reward, and Momonga was also surprised at his reaction. Indeed, this ring was only for a dedicated member of the guild to use, there were only one hundred of these special items.

These rings were already distributed among the 41 other members, so there were another 59 rings. No… 58 rings who did not have an owner. This was indeed a valuable item, but to give this as a reward, there was the hope it would be properly utilized.

In order to calm Mare who wanted to run away, Momonga solemnly told Mare: "Calm down, Mare."

"No, no, no way! How could I accept the ring that only the Supreme Ruler can have—"

"Think calmly Mare. In the Great Tomb of Nazarick, not having the ability to teleport would bring about a lot of inconvenience." Hearing this, Mare slowly started to calm down. "I hope that in the event that an enemy attack, each of the Guardians could act as a commander for every floor, when it comes to that time, if you cannot freely teleport or escape, it would be too unsightly; that is why I am giving this ring to you." Momonga held the ring in his hand. Under the moonlight, the ring seemed to emit a glorious shine.

"Mare, I feel very happy about your loyalty: I also understand why, as a subordinate, you wouldn't want to accept the ring that represents us. However, if you understand my feelings then you will accept my command and take this ring."

"Bu-, But, why me… Could it be the other Guardians received one…?"

"Although I intend to give one to them, you would be the first. Because I am satisfied with your work, if I gave it to someone who did nothing it would devalue the ring as a reward. Do you want me to reduce the value of this ring?"

"No, I would never dare!"

"Then take it, Mare. After taking this ring, continue working hard for both Nazarick and me."

Mare nervously extended his hand, and slowly accepted the ring. Seeing Mare do this, Momonga felt guilty. Even though he wanted to give the ring as a gift, he also had another selfish reason. If others were able to teleport as well, it would become easier for Momonga to move unnoticed. Once Mare put on the ring of Ainz Ooal Gown, it instantly changed its size to fit Mare's slender finger.

Mare started intensely at the ring on his finger, relaxed a little and sighed. Then he bowed deeply towards Momonga… "Momonga-sama, thank-, thank you very much for giving me this gift… From now on, I will work harder in order to not disappoint the expectations of Momonga-sama!"

"Then forgive me for troubling you, Mare."

"Yes!" Mare resolutely answered, his young face showing off an unwavering resolve. *The one who designed Mare, Bukubuku Chagama-san, why did you make him wear this kind of clothes?* Was it to create a contrast to Aura's attire or was there another reason? Just as Momonga was thinking about this, Mare asked a question. "If… If I may ask Momonga-sama… Why are you dressed this way?"

"…Eh, well…" Because he wanted to sneak away… Of course he could not say that. Mare looked up with sparkling eyes and watched the troubled Momonga. How would he deceive him? If this fails, then his act of being a dignified superior would go to waste. There was no subordinate who would approve of a superior who wanted to sneak away.

Momonga tried to come up with an excuse but was unable to think of anything, but at that moment a voice spoke up behind them. "It is simple, Mare." Turning around Momonga was immediately entranced. She could be seen as a beautiful lady standing in the moonlight.

The bluish moonlight illuminated her, making her shine as if a goddess had descended. Her black wings were waving, blowing a gust of wind in front of them. It was Albedo. Although Demiurge had also arrived, due to Albedo's beauty Momonga did not notice his presence immediately.

"Momonga-sama wore the armor in order to conceal his name, to avoid interrupting anyone's work. If they saw Momonga-sama's arrival, everyone would stop what they were doing and salute in respect. However, Momonga-sama did not want to interfere with everyone's work and that's why he dressed up as the Black Knight."

"Is that right, Momonga-sama?" Hearing Albedo's question, Momonga immediately nodded: "As expected of Albedo, to see through my intentions."

"As the Commander of the Guardians, this is a given. No, even if I was not the Commander, I believe I would still be able to understand Momonga-sama's heart." Smiling, Albedo gave a deep

bow, while Demiurge showed a complicated expression. Even though he disagreed with her, he had no way to clear up her misconceptions. “So it was like that…”

Mare realized after hearing the explanation. Looking at her line of sight towards Mare, Momonga saw something incredible. Albedo’s eyes suddenly widened, as if her eyes were going to pop out, and with jerky movements she pointed towards Mare’s finger. Just as Momonga started thinking about it, Albedo’s face suddenly returned to her original beautiful appearance, as if the scene from before was just an illusion. “…Anything wrong?”

“Ah, no, nothing is wrong… Well then, Mare, sorry to bother you. Continue your work after some rest.”

“Ye-Yes! Then Momonga-sama, I will retire first.” Momonga casually nodded, Mare then left while rubbing the ring on his finger. “Speaking of which, why is Albedo here?”

“Yes, because I heard from Demiurge that Momonga-sama would be here, I decided to give my regards. I apologize that you have to see my dirty appearance.”

Hearing the words dirty, Momonga looked at Albedo, but was unable to think of her as dirty at all. Although there was a bit of dirt on her clothes, it totally did not detract from her beauty. “Nothing of the sort Albedo, your beauty will not lose its lustre over something like this. Of course, having such a beautiful woman run around like this feels wrong to me. But right now, the situation is quite dire, so forgive me. I hope that you will continue your hard work for Nazarick.”

“For Momonga-sama, no matter how difficult it is, there will be no problems!”

“Thank you for your devotion. Right… Albedo, there is something I want to give to you.”

“…What… Is it?”

Humbly bowing her head, Albedo asked in a dull tone. Momonga took out a ring and of course it was a ring of Ainz Ooal Gown. “As the Commander of the Guardians, you would definitely need this.”

“…Many thanks.” Her reaction differed greatly from Mare, so Momonga felt somewhat disappointed. But then he immediately realized his mistake. The corners of Albedo’s mouth started to spasm, her face was constantly changing. Her wings were constantly trembling and that was because she was suppressing her urge to spread them. Taking the ring, she was already tightly clutching it, she started to tremble. No matter how stupid the person, her excitement was obvious to everyone.

“Continue with your loyalty. As for Demiurge… We will talk next time.”

“Understood, Momonga-sama. I will continue to work hard in order to earn the right to receive this great ring.”

“That’s it. With that the things I’ve wanted to do is done, I should return back to the 9th floor before I receive a scolding.” Seeing Albedo and Demiurge lowering their heads in response, Momonga activated his ring of Ainz Ooal Gown and started to teleport.

The moment the scenery started to change, he thought he heard the sound of a girl screaming "Kyaa!", but since the idea that Albedo would use a crude expression like that was absurd, Momonga just assumed he heard wrongly.

Part 2

The outskirts of the village were getting closer. While running, Enri heard the constant sounds of metal hitting metal. With a prayer, she looked back and saw the worst possible situation. A knight was right behind the sisters. Just a little bit more and he would catch up with them.

Enri held back the urge to curse about her situation, she no longer had any strength left to waste complaining. Her breath felt short, her heart pumped so hard it felt like it was going to burst and her legs trembled constantly. Perhaps soon, she would be too exhausted and just fall to the ground. If she was alone, she might have given up hope and lose all strength to run.

But holding the hand of her sister gave Enri the will to keep on running. Yes, it was all because of wanting to save her sister that Enri continued to flee now. While running, she kept on looking back. The distance had not changed. Although the knight was wearing armor, his speed was not slow at all. The difference between a highly trained soldier and a normal village girl was obvious. Enri felt chills go down her spine. If this continued… It would be impossible to bring her sister to safety.

Let go. These words entered Enri's mind. *If you're alone, you may be able to escape. Do you want to die here? Splitting up wouldn't necessarily be safer.* "Shut up, shut up, shut up!" Screaming loudly, Enri angrily reproached herself. She was the worst sister. Her younger sister looked like she was about to cry, but why wasn't she already crying? It was because she believed in her older sister. She believed that her older sister would save her. Holding her younger sister's hand… The hand that gave her courage, Enri strengthened her resolve. She could never abandon her sister.

"Ah!" Enri wasn't the only one exhausted, her younger sister had also used up a lot of energy running away. Because of that, her steps suddenly stumbled, causing her she to scream and almost fall down. The reason why the two did not fall down was because they were holding each other's hands. It was only because of her younger sister pulling her up, that Enri didn't lose her balance.

"Quickly!"

"Huff, huff!" Although they wanted to continue running, her sister's leg cramped up and stopped moving. Enri thought of carrying her sister, but metallic sounds stopped right next to her, scaring Enri to no end. Standing beside her was a knight with a bloody sword. Not only that, the armor and helmet also had traces of blood splatter. Enri stood in front of her sister and glared fiercely at the knight.

"Don't struggle unnecessarily." These words were said without the slightest hesitation, words full of ridicule. Words saying that even if they ran, they would not escape death. Enri's heart suddenly burst out with emotion, wondering what he was talking about. The knight slowly raised his sword above the unmoving Enri. The moment that the sword was about to come down onto Enri—

"Don't look down on people!"

“Guuu!” Enri mercilessly struck his helmet. That strike held all of her anger and also all of her desire to protect her sister, she was not afraid of striking the metal with her fists. It was a strike that used up all her energy. Hearing the sound of bones breaking, pain suddenly spread throughout Enri’s whole body. The knight who endured such a blow, started to sway violently.

“Run!”

“Eh!” Enri endured the pain and started to run and then suddenly she felt a burning sensation on her back. “Wuuu!”

“You damn bitch!” After being hit in the head by a simple village girl, the knight flew into a rage. He had lost his calm and was wildly swinging his sword around. As a result, he was unable to cut Enri down, but next time she wouldn’t be so lucky. Because Enri was injured and the knight was raging, the next strike would definitely be fatal. Enri looked at the sword raised high in front of her, shining in the light, and understood two things. First, they would both be killed in a few seconds. Second, as an ordinary village girl, there was no way to resist.

The sword’s tip was covered in a bit of her blood. That sight made her feel her own heartbeat, the pain from her back spreading through her body and the burning sensation of when she was cut. Having never experienced this sort of pain before caused her to feel fear and she felt like vomiting. Perhaps vomiting could dissipate the feeling of fear.

But Enri was looking for ways to survive, there was no time to waste throwing up. Although in her heart she wanted to despair, Enri had a reason for not giving up. That was the feeling of warmth next to her chest, her younger sister. At least my sister must live. This one thought made Enri choose not to give up.

However, right in front of her stood a knight, mocking her determination. Lifting his sword high, getting ready to swing the sword down. It could have been her concentrating too much, or that the life or death situation made her mind go into overdrive, Enri felt time slow down as she thought of ways to save her sister. But she couldn’t think of a good solution. The most she could think of was to use her own body as a shield, and while the sword pierced her body, her sister could use that time to run away, that would be the last resort.

As long as she had strength left, no matter who pierced her, she wouldn’t let go until the fire of her life burned out. If that happened, then she would accept that fate. Enri felt like a martyr and showed a smile. This was the only thing that she could do for her sister. This thought made Enri smile. She was unsure if her sister alone would be able to escape this hell. Even if she fled into the forest, she could encounter patrolling soldiers.

But as long as she could survive this, there was a chance that she would be able to escape. Just for the chance for her sister to live, Enri bet her life, no she bet her everything she had. Even so, being scared of the incoming pain, she could not help but close her eyes. In the world of darkness, she mentally prepared herself for her imminent death—

Part 3

Momonga sat on a chair, facing a mirror. The mirror was about 1-meter-high and instead of showing his reflection, it had the image of a grassland. The mirror was like a television, showing

the scene of an unknown prairie. The grass swayed in the mirror, proving that it wasn't just a still image.

As time passed, the sun rose, driving away the darkness shrouding the grasslands. The picturesque charm of the rustic countryside was a huge difference as compared to the gloomy despair of Helheim, where Nazarick was previously located in. Momonga pointed to the mirror and gently waved to the right. The scene reflected in the mirror quickly changed.

'Remote Viewing Lens'. For Player Killers (PK) or Player Killer Killers (PKK), this item that could display the location of players would be invaluable. However, if the players just use some low level anti-search magic, they could easily hide beyond sight. Not only that, it would be easy to receive an attack while using it, so the mirror was actually a very balanced item. But with this, one could easily see the outside scenery and for the current situation this was a very useful tool. Admiring the grasslands like watching a movie, the scenery in the mirror was constantly changing.

"I can change the images by waving my hand, then with that I should be able to view different angles of the same place." Momonga drew a circle in the air, the view of the scenery changed. Although he kept on changing the view in the mirror using hand gestures, hoping to find people, he was unable to find any signs of intelligent life, preferably humans. He continued doing this monotonous job, but the only things reflected on the mirror after every change were more grasslands. After watching for so long, he felt bored, and thus looked at the only other person in the room. "Anything wrong Momonga-sama? If you require anything, please do not hesitate to tell me."

"No, it's nothing, Sebas." The other person in the room, Sebas, showed a smile, but his previous sentence actually had another meaning. Although Sebas is bound to absolutely obey any order, the fact that Momonga did not bring his entourage made Sebas feel a bit unhappy. After coming back from above ground, Sebas lectured him. "Well, he does have a point…" Momonga spoke out what was in his heart. When he was with Sebas, he was reminded of his previous guild member, Touch Me-san.

He was the one who designed Sebas after all. But he didn't have to design Sebas to look exactly like him, even his angry look was just as scary. After silently complaining, Momonga once again looked at the mirror. Momonga thought about teaching the technique of manipulating the mirror to Demiurge. This was in regards to what he told Demiurge previously, about an idea to improve the security network. Although it would've been easier to give this responsibility to a subordinate, Momonga still felt like he should do this personally.

Actually he had another motive, it was that he wanted his subordinates to see him hard at work and admire him. So he definitely cannot let boredom cause him to quit halfway. And the reason why wasn't he looking at things from a higher angle… If only there was a manual…

With a bitter expression, Momonga continued the boring task of experimenting with the mirror. An unknown amount of time passed. It could have been a short time, but if there were no results, one could only feel that time was being wasted. With an empty expression, Momonga randomly gestured, suddenly the scene grew bigger.

"Oh!" Surprise, joy, pride, with those emotions Momonga exclaimed. After a long time of making random hand gestures, finally the images changed according to his will. Like a group of

programmers that had just finished eight hours of overtime, Momonga cheered. In response to his cheers, sounds of applause could be heard. That sound obviously came from Sebas.

"Congratulations, Momonga-sama. Truly admirable!" After going through much trial and error and finally getting a result, would not necessarily be worth such praise. Momonga was thinking in this way, but after seeing Sebas' happy expression, he frankly accepted his praise. "Thank you, Sebas, but for you to accompany for this long, I apologize."

"What are you saying, to be at Momonga-sama's side, to obey your orders, would be the meaning of a butler's existence. There is no need to apologize… But, you have spent a lot of time doing this. Momonga-sama would you like to take a break?"

"No, there is no need. For someone undead like myself, there won't be any feelings of fatigue. However, if you are tired, it is alright if you go rest."

"Thank you for your thoughtfulness, but what kind of the servant rests while his master is hard at work. With the help of some items, I too will never feel physical fatigue, please allow me to stay by your side until you are finished."

From that conversation, Momonga noticed one thing. It was that everyone would casually use game terms. Such as Special Skills, Classes, Items, Status, Damage, Negative Effects and so on… With a serious face, they were saying game terms. Then from now on it would be easier to give instructions. After Momonga approved of Sebas' request, he returned to experimenting on methods to control the mirror. Finally finding a way to adjust the height of the view.

Showing a satisfied smile, Momonga began to look for places with people. Finally, the scene of a village appeared. Located approximately ten kilometers from the Great Tomb of Nazarick, near a forest, surrounded by wheat fields was a country style village. At first glance, the village was not all that advanced. Momonga expanded the view of the village, and felt like something was strange.

"…Are they organizing a festival?" It was early in the morning and people were running in and out of houses, making everything feel very chaotic. "No, this is no festival." Coming to his side, and looking into the mirror with his sharp eyes. Sebas gave a steely reply. Sebas' firm tone was full of disgust, after expanding the view, Momonga also frowned.

Knights wearing full suits of armor were raising their swords, chasing down villagers who wore nothing but rags. This was a massacre. With every strike, a villager would fall. The villagers did not seem to have any defense; they could only desperately escape. The knights continued to kill the fleeing villagers. In the fields you could see a horse eating the wheat, it probably belonged to one of the knights.

"Tch!" Momonga made a sound, and wanted to immediately change the image. This village had no strategic value. He might've tried to find a way to save the village if there was something to gain for him, but looking at the situation there was no reason at all to save the village. There was no reason for him to save them.

After coming to that grim decision, Momonga began to doubt his own thoughts. There was a massacre right in front of his eyes, but all he could think about was what would be best for

Nazarick. His heart already was missing the feelings of pity, anger or anxiety that a human should have. It was like watching a television show about animals and insects preying on each other.

Was it possible that after becoming an undead, he no longer considered himself as a human? No, how could that be. Momonga desperately tried to find excuses in order to justify his own thinking. He was not some righteous messenger. Although he was at least level 100, just as he told Mare before, the world could have normal people who are also level 100.

So one could not just head out into such an unknown world. The knights could have a reason to justify their actions. It could be sickness, crime or just a show of force, many different reasons came to Momonga's mind. Not only that but repelling the knights would turn the country they represented into his enemy.

Momonga stretched out his bony hand and… Scratched his skull, thinking. After turning into an undead who was immune to mental effects, did he really feel nothing after looking at such a scene? Definitely not. Waving again, the mirror reflected the image of another corner of the village.

What appeared was the scene of two knights about to end the life of a struggling villager. The villager had his hands bound and was unable to budge. In front of his eyes, the villager was pierced. The sword went through the body and out the other side, it was a fatal blow. However, it did not stop there. One, two, three times. As if they were venting their anger, they repeatedly hacked at the villagers.

Finally, the knight kicked at the villager, as blood pooled around his body. The villager locked eyes with Momonga. Perhaps this was just his imagination. This was definitely just a coincidence. Without anti-search magic, it was impossible to detect the mirror's vision. Blood flowed out from the villager's mouth, as he desperately tried to speak. His eyes blurred, he did not know where he was looking, and it was clear that he was dying, but he opened his mouth and articulated one line: "*Please save my daughter."*

"What are your plans?" Sebas seemed to have read the mood, and quietly asked. There was only one answer. Momonga calmly answered: "Nothing. There is no reason, value or benefit to saving them. "Yes sir." Momonga calmly looked at Sebas and beside him he could see the shadow of his former guildmate. "This… Touch Me-san…"

At this moment, Momonga thought of one line. *"If the road is harsh, it is only natural to take your sword and help."* When Momonga first started playing Yggdrasil, hunting demi-human and heteromorphic races was extremely popular, and as an undead Momonga was subject to being hunted as well. On the verge of quitting Yggdrasil, the words of a certain person saved him. If it wasn't for those words, Momonga would not be here. Momonga sighed softly, then showed a helpless smile. After remembering this memory, he had to go save those people.

"A man must always show gratitude… Anyways, sooner or later I would have to confirm my abilities in this world." After Momonga had finished talking to his friend who was not here, he enlarged the view of the village until it was fully visible. His purpose was to find any surviving villagers.

"Sebas, raise Nazarick's alert level to the highest. I will go ahead first, notify Albedo that she should follow me fully armed. However, there is no need to bring Hell's Abyss. Then go and

prepare some backup troops. We have to prepare for any unforeseen events that might render me to be unable to escape, so prepare people with stealth abilities in case we need to deal with the enemies in this village."

"Yes my Lord, but protecting Momonga-sama is the duty that was passed to me."

"Who gave you that kind of order…? Those knights are razing that village, which means that there may be knights capable of invading Nazarick nearby. So you must stay behind."

The scene changed, the image of a young girl punching a knight entered into his eyes. The girl held another younger girl, who must have been her sister, and they attempted to run. Momonga quickly opened his item chest, and took out the staff of Ainz Ooal Gown. The moment the girl tried to run, her back was slashed.

Since time was of the essence, Momonga invoked the word of power: "「Gate」." No distance limitations, transfer failure rate 0%. During the time that Momonga played Yggdrasil, this was the most accurate teleportation magic. The scene in front of his eyes changed. Seeing the teleportation magic hindered by nothing, Momonga breathed a sigh of relief. To be captured instead of saving someone would be the worse outcome.

The scene in front of his eyes was exactly the same as before. In front of his eyes were two girls cowering in fear. Looking at the younger sister, he saw a head full of chestnut colored hair, braided into pigtails. Her healthy skin that were constantly exposed to the sun, now lost all color due to fear, her dark eyes overflowing with tears.

The younger sister was burying her face in the waist of her sister and shivered with fear. With cold eyes, Momonga stared at the knight in front of the two girls. It was unclear whether it was because of Momonga's sudden appearance, but the knight turned towards Momonga, forgetting about the sword that he was brandishing.

From young, Momonga had led a life bereft of violence. Regarding the current world that he was in, he was sure that it was not the virtual world, but instead the real world. Even so, looking into the eyes of the sword wielding knight in front of him, he was not in the least bit scared. With that, he made a calm judgement. Momonga stretched out his hands and activated his magic: "「Grasp Heart」."

This magic will crush the enemy's heart, out of the ten tiers of magic, this magic was ranked at 9th tier of Necromancy magic. Of the Necromancy spells that Momonga had, many of them contained the property of death, this magic was one such spell. The reason why he chose this spell was because even if the enemy managed to resist the spell, it will still cause him to become hazy as a negative side effect. If it was resisted, he intended to take the two girls and jump into the open 'Gate'.

During a situation where he has yet to find out the details of his opponent, it would be better to have a plan where he could easily advance and retreat. Just that he was completely unable to execute that plan. With the feeling of crushing something soft, the knight went limp and fell silent. Momonga coldly looked at the fallen knight. His heart knew that his prediction came true… Even after killing a person he felt nothing. His heart felt no guilt, fear or confusion, it was as tranquil as

the undisturbed surface of a lake. Why was that? “So it seems… It’s not just the body, but also my heart has stopped being human…”

Momonga walked forward. While walking past the two girls, it could be fear due to the way that the knight died, but the younger sister, suspicious of Momonga, let out a sound. Momonga obviously came to save her. Even so, the way that the girl reacted to him was strange, exactly what was she thinking? Although he was skeptical, right now Momonga did not have much time. Confirming that the girl still had a bloody wound on her back, Momonga stood in front of the two girls and sharply watched the other knight exiting from the nearby house. The knight, seeing Momonga, fearfully took a step back.

“…You dare to chase little girls, but don’t have the courage to stand against enemies?” Momonga faced the knight who was filled with fear, and started to choose what magic he wanted to use. Previously, Momonga had used a spell, the high tier ‘Grasp Heart’. This was in a field of magic that he was well versed in. Because Momonga was an expert specialized in death spells, and because of his Undead Overlord class, the effect of ‘Grasp Heart’ was greatly improved.

However, with that he was unable to measure the real strength of the knights. So in order for the knight to use any of his other skills, he mustn’t be killed instantly. This way he can judge the strength of this world and also confirm his own strength. “Since I’ve took the time to come here, I should find another subject to experiment on. You will accompany me on this experiment.”

Although Momonga’s necromantic magic was strengthened, the power of his basic magic spells was not high. In addition, metal armor was usually weak against shock attacks, so during the time inside Yggdrasil, most people would add shock resistance to their armor. Because of that, Momonga decided to use a shock spell against the knight, in order to calculate the damage. In order not to kill the enemy, he did not use any special enhancing effects.

“「Lightning Dragon」.” White lightning that looked like a dragon fiercely surged forth from Momonga’s hands and shoulders. Flashes of white lightning dazzled the eyes and went towards the knight that Momonga pointed at. There was no escape and no defense. The dragon-shaped lightning hit the body of the knight, letting out dazzling white light which, in a twist of fate, looked truly beautiful. The dazzling light faded and like a broken doll, the knight fell to the ground. The body underneath the armor charred, letting out a foul stench. Originally wanting to chase after the knight, Momonga was dumbfounded at how weak the knight was.

“How weak… To die from such a thing…” For Momonga, a 5th tier spell like ‘Lightning Dragon’ was weak. During the times when he was fighting against level 100 players, Momonga would only use spells of 8th tier or higher. 5th tier spells would almost never be used. Knowing that the knight was weak enough to allow a 5th tier spell to kill him, the tension within Momonga instantly dissipated. Of course, it could be possible that these two knight were the only weak ones, but even so he began to lose his tension.

However, his plan to use teleportation magic to withdraw had not changed. The knights could also have been experts in close combat. In Yggdrasil, a hit to the neck would cause a significant increase in damage, but right now, in the real world it could be fatal. Momonga once again raised his tension. Dying because of a careless mistake would be too stupid. Right now he should continue testing out his own strength. Momonga activated his own special skill.

"「Raise Death Knight」." This was one of Momonga's special abilities, the creation of undead monsters. The Death Knight was one of Momonga's favorite creatures since it was very useful as a shield. With a level around 35, its strength would be equal to a level 25 monster, but its defensive power was very good, comparable to a level 40 monster.

For Momonga, a monster like that was very useful. However, the Death Knight had two very important special skills. One was the ability to attract the attacks of an enemy. The other one could be used only once, but it would always survive one lethal attack as long as it had a certain amount of health left.

Because of these two special skills, Momonga enjoyed using Death Knights as a shield. This time as well, he created it to act as his shield. In Yggdrasil, just by using the special ability of creating undead, undead would appear out of the air near the summoner. However, for this world it seemed to be different. Black mist appeared out of nowhere, flew towards the knight whose heart had been crushed and covered him. The mist slowly expanded and… Entered the body of the knight. Then like a zombie, the knight slowly stood up.

"Yiii!" Although the girls shrieked, Momonga didn't notice. Because he was also surprised at the sight before him. Moving with a grumbling sound, black liquid flowed out from the silt in the helmet, which should be coming out from the knight's mouth. The black liquid flowed out endlessly, covering the whole body. It looks like a slime swallowing a human.

After being completely covered by the liquid slime, it began to distort into a human form. After a few seconds, the black liquid receded and what stood in front of his eyes was certainly a Death Knight. About 230 centimeters tall, its body was larger and no longer looked like a human, saying it was a beast was more fitting.

Its left hand was holding a tower shield that covered three-fourths of its body and in its right hand it held a corrugated sword. The sword was nearly one hundred and thirty centimeters long. Normally one needs both hands to pick up, but the huge Death Knight is easily lifting it with one hand. The sword is coated with waves of terrifying red and black fog, agitating the surrounding like a constant a heartbeat.

His huge body wore a body armor made of black metal with red bloodlines engraved on it. The armor had sharp thorns everywhere and looked like the incarnation of violence. Two demonic horns emerged from the helmet, with the face being visible underneath. It was a disgusting, rotted face whose empty eye sockets were filled with hate and killing intent, glowing with a flashing red light.

With its tattered black cloak flapping in the wind, the death knight was waiting for Momonga's commands. It radiated an aura worthy of being called Death Knight. Similar to summoning a Primal Fire Elemental or a Moonlight Wolf, Momonga established a link with the summoned spirit which was the knight killed by 'Grasp Heart' and ordered him: "The knights attacking the village… Wipe them out."

"Ohhhhhhhhh!" It let out a deafening roar. Those who heard the roar full of bloodlust felt their skin crawl, and even the air started to shake. The Death Knight began to run forward without hesitation, its movements fast as lightning, like a bloodhound who had found his prey. Being an undead with a hatred for the living, the Death Knight wanted to eradicate the enemy. Looking at

the back of the disappearing Death Knight, Momonga felt that there was a distinct difference between now and Yggdrasil.

That would be the 'Freedom of Movement'. Originally the Death Knight would remain on standby close to their summoner, Momonga, and wait for an opportunity to attack incoming enemies. They wouldn't listen to such kind of orders and automatically attack. The difference in this situation was the lack of information, which may prove to be fatal. Momonga suddenly felt like he made a blunder, he scratched his head and sighed. "He already ran off… To throw away my protective shield. Although the one who gave the order was me…"

Momonga blamed himself for his mistake. While he was still able to create a lot more Death Knights he still didn't know much about the strength of his enemies, which was why he needed to save up his limited number of spells. Furthermore, since Momonga's magic was usually used from the rear-guard, being without any kind of defense right now made him feel like being naked in the front of danger. Therefore, he needed to create another shield. For this experiment, he decided to see if it was possible to create one without a corpse. Just as he was thinking about it, another figure came out from the still open 'Gate'.

At the same time the 'Gate' started to slowly disappear without a trace. A person dressed in a full set of black armor appeared. The armor made the figure look like a devil. Covered with spikes and not showing the tiniest amount of skin. Wearing metal gloves with long claws, in one hand a black kite shield, the other holding an axe gently emitting a green glow. Wearing a blood red cloak fluttering in the wind, complementing the red blouse worn underneath. "It took some time for me to prepare, I apologize for making you wait."

Albedo's melodious voice came from under the full cover helmet. Albedo's levels were invested in the expert defensive techniques of the Dark Knight profession. Therefore, among the three level 100 NPCs in Nazarick; Sebas, Cocytus and Albedo. Albedo boasted the highest defensive power. It could be said that she was Nazarick's strongest shield.

"No problem, as long as you've arrived."

"Thank you. Then… How do you wish to dispose of these inferior creatures? If Momonga-sama does not wish to dirty his hand, please leave this task to me."

"…What did Sebas tell you?" Albedo did not respond. "So you didn't actually listen… I want to save this village. The enemies are those knights in armor lying on the ground over there." Seeing Albedo nod her head in understanding, Momonga shifted his eyes. "Well…"

The two girls shivered from Momonga's gaze, wanting to hide themselves. They were constantly trembling, unclear if it was because of seeing the Death Knight, or the roar, or hearing Albedo's statement. Maybe it was all of those. Momonga believes he should show a sign of good faith, and reached out his hand to help heal the older sister, but the girls misunderstood his intentions. The older sister wet herself, the younger sister also couldn't control herself.

"…" The smell of ammonia began to spread all around, making Momonga feel an intense feeling of fatigue. Although he did not know what to do, asking Albedo for help would also be useless, so Momonga decided to continue with a kind voice: "…You seem to be hurt." As a member of society,

Momonga was already used to a certain amount of distrust. Momonga pretended to see nothing and opened up his Item chest to take out a bag.

Although this bag was called the Infinite Haversack, you could only put a maximum of 500 kilograms of items in it. Because the items in this bag could be put into the control panel as shortcuts, the players in Yggdrasil would always put the items they needed to use quickly inside this bag. Rummaging through the bag, he finally found a bottle of red syrup.

Minor Healing Potion. This small low-grade drug could restore 50 health; it would be used often during the early levels of Yggdrasil. However, for Momonga right now, this would be a completely useless item. Because this potion would grant him positive healing, for an undead like Momonga it would be the same as taking poison. However, since not all of his guild members were undead Momonga kept this item around.

"Drink." Momonga held out the red syrup. The older sister's face paled: "I, I will drink it! But please let my younger sister go—"

"Sister!" With a crying face, the younger sister was trying to stop the older sister, also apologizing to her sister who was going to grab onto the potion. Looking at the interaction between the sisters, Momonga felt confused. From the beginning he was obviously trying to save them, even going so far as to offer them a potion, why must they show their sisterly affection towards each other in front of him. What the heck is going on? Not willing to trust anything.

Although from the start they were waiting to face death, but right now he should be considered their savior, they should be crying and gratefully thanking him for his kindness. Don't scenes like these happen a lot in Manga and movies? But the situation in front of him was totally different.

What went wrong? Could it be that I must have a beautiful appearance in order to receive that privilege? Doubt floated onto Momonga's skinless face, but then a gentle voice could be heard: "…Momonga-sama has kindly given you medicine, but to think that you would refuse to accept it… Insignificant beings… You should be killed for your insolence."

Albedo naturally raised her axe, intending to behead the two of them. After facing danger to save them, just to receive this kind of treatment… Momonga could understand Albedo's feelings, but if she killed these two children it would defeat the purpose of saving them. "Wa-, wait, stop being reckless. There are priorities in this situation, put down your weapon."

"…Yes, Momonga-sama." Albedo warmly replied, putting down her axe. However, Albedo was emitting intense killing intent, strong enough to make the two girls tremble in fear, it also gave Momonga a bad feeling in his stomach. In short, they should quickly leave this place. If they continued to stay here, it is unknown how much unfortunate events will happen. Momonga once again handed out the medicine: "This drug is medicine, there is no danger. Drink it quickly."

Momonga said with a strong and gentle tone. At the same time, it also implied that if they didn't quickly drink it, they would be killed. Hearing that, the older sister quickly took the potion and drank it. Then with a startled expression: "No way…" Touching her back, not believing she tried to twist her body, and started to touch and pat her back. "It doesn't hurt anymore right?"

"Ye-Yes."

The older sister nodded in shock. It seems like the wound on her body was minor, just by using a low level drug would be enough. Seeing that he was approved of, Momonga wanted to ask a question. This was a question that was impossible to avoid, it could potentially affect future actions. “Do you know about magic?”

“Ye-, yes. Occasionally a pharmacist will come to our village… Our friend is also able to use magic.”

“…So it’s like that, then this would make things easier to explain. I am a magic caster.” Momonga began to chant magic: “「Anti-Life Cocoon」, 「Wall of Arrow Protection」.”

With the sisters as the center, a three-meter-high protective light covered them. The second spell was invisible to the naked eye, but the flow of air around them changed. Usually it was enough to just re-cast the first magic to ensure it was fool proof, but since there was no knowing what kind of spells were available in this world, this had to suffice. If the enemy had a magician within their ranks, then it would just be bad luck for these girls.

“I have surrounded you with protective spells that will protect you from most monsters, and a spell that will weaken ranged attacks. All you have to do is to stay here and you should be safe, just in case, I’ll hand you this item.” The sisters were shocked at the description of the magic, Momonga then threw two plain horns at them.

The horns were not stopped by the magic and fell through the Wall of Arrow Protection to land next to the sister’ side. “That item is called ‘Horn of the Goblin General’, you just need to blow into the horn and Goblins, small monsters will appear in front of you. You can order them to protect yourselves.”

In Yggdrasil, other than consumables, some items were able to be converted into data crystals, making it possible to add their effect to other items. Still, there were certain items that couldn’t be converted and this horn was one of those low level items. With this horn, Momonga was able to summon twelve weak goblins, two goblin archers, one goblin mage, one goblin priest, two goblin wolf riders and one goblin leader. Also known as the goblin army, it was a small force and pretty weak.

For Momonga, this was a trash item and it was strange he didn’t throw it away yet. Being able to find a proper use for this item right now, Momonga felt really clever. There other advantage of this item was that once the Goblins were summoned, they would only disappear after dying and not after a set amount of time has passed.

They would be useful for buying time at least. Being done, Momonga turned his body around to leave while thinking about the status of the village, with Albedo walking by his side. But after walking a few steps, two voices could be heard behind him.

“That is… Tha-Thank you for saving us!”

“Thank you!”

Those two lines made Momonga stop, he turned around and saw two girls, eyes brimming with tears, thanking him. He replied with one short sentence: “…Don’t worry about it.”

“Al-, also, although it may be selfish of me, but we can only rely on people like you. Please, please! Save our parents as well!”

“Got it. If they are alive, I will save them.”

Hearing Momonga’s answer, the older sister opened her eyes, showing her disbelief. She quickly recovered and bowed in thanks: “Tha-Thank you! Thank you, really thank you so much! Also, may I ask you…”

The girl hesitated to ask: “What is your name…?”

Momonga almost blurted out his own name, but in the end, he didn’t say it. The name Momonga was the name of the Guild Master of the bygone guild of Ainz Ooal Gown. What would he call himself now? The name for the last person to stay within the Great Tomb of Nazarick… *Ah, that’s right.*

“…Remember my name. My name is, Ainz Ooal Gown.”

Part 4

”OHHHHHHAAAAAAAAAAHHHHHHHH!” A roar that shakes the surroundings. This signals the start of another massacre… The hunter became the hunted. Londes Di Gelanpo didn't know how many times he cursed his own faith in God. But never in his whole life did he curse it as often as he doddering the last few minutes. If God really existed, then he should've been coming down by now to defeat this monster. Why was god doing nothing when Londes was such a devoted believer?

Because God didn't exist. Over the years, he always despised those silly people who didn't believe in God, if you really did not believe in God, then how was magic of priests established, but now it turned out he was the stupid one. In front of him, the monster, which they called Death Knight for the moment… Drew closer step by step. Out of reflex, he retreated two steps backwards to increase the distance again.

His body armor continued to shudder with a squawking sound and the sword clenched in his hands couldn't stop trembling. The Death Knight was surrounded by a group of 18 knights, but the swords of all his companions were shaking as well. Although their bodies were overwhelmed with fear, nobody tried to run away.

This wasn't out of bravery since every single one of them was paralyzed with fear. Their shivering bodies caused their armor to give of a clattering sound. If they believed they could escape, they would've definitely started to desperately run for their lives… It was because they knew they couldn't escape.

Londes slightly shifted his eyes to look for help. This place was the village square in the center of the village. Sixty people were gathered here, the villagers Londes captured. Londes saw their expressions of fear after looking at them. A group of kids were hiding behind a high wooden pedestal.

They were some children with sticks trying to defend their parents, but they could not assume a fighting posture and their sticks were dropping low due to total exhaustion. When Londes

attacked this village, the villagers rushed to the central square from all directions. After searching through the houses, in order to prevent people from hiding in a secret basement, they prepared alchemic oils to burn the houses to the ground.

Four mounted knights, each equipped with a bow, guarded the village's surroundings. They would shoot anyone who managed to escape. This method had been used several times already and had proven to be infallible. Although the slaughter took some time, it went fairly smoothly.

The surviving villagers were herded together in one place and then they would let a few of them flee just as planned. That was what was supposed to happen, but… Londes still remembered that moment. Behind the villagers who escaped into the square, his companion Ilian, who was responsible for the clean-up was suddenly thrown into the air.

Due to how unbelievable it was, no one realized what was happening. Seeing a well-built man wearing a full suit of armor, although it was possible to reduce its weight with magic — it was impossible to remove all of it — thrown into the air like a toy, nobody would believe their eyes.

Ilian flew a distance of more than seven meters, landed with a deafening noise and stopped moving. In Ilian's place, there was an even more unbelievable sight… Standing in front of them was a gruesome, undead monster, the 'Death Knight', which slowly lowered the shield which had sent Ilian flying, stood before them. After that, the whole situation devolved into chaos.

"Aaaahhhhhh!" A chaotic scream started to fill the air in the square. One of his companions surrounding the area couldn't stand the terror, cried out desperately and tried to escape. In this kind of state, it was hard to maintain their encircling formation and with the high tension it could easily collapse. However, not a single knight tried to flee with him. The reason for that became apparent immediately. At the corner of Londes' vision appeared a black whirlwind.

Although the Death Knight had a huge body and its size greatly exceeded the average height of a human, its agility was unbelievable. His escaping companion only managed to get three steps away. Before he was able to take his fourth step, his shiny silver body was suddenly cut apart. The separated left and right halves of his body fell apart in different directions. The smell of sour gas spreads immediately to the surrounding and pink innards were scattered from his cross section.

"Goowuuuwuuuwuuu—" Waving his corrugated swords around, the blood spattered while the Death Knight roared loudly. It was a cry of joy… Even people who couldn't look at its decaying face were able to see its joy. The Death Knight, with its overwhelming lust for killing, enjoyed human vulnerability, terror and despair.

Even though their hands were holding swords, no one dared to attack at first. After recovering from their initial shock, they tried to attack, but even when a sword slipped past the opponent's defense with a lucky hit it was unable to cause the slightest damage to the Death Knight's body armor.

On the contrary, the Death Knight didn't even use his sword, he just used his shield to send Londes flying. Not only that, the blow wasn't even fatal. It would deliberately show openings, wanting to do nothing more than to tease them. It was obvious the Death Knight wanted to enjoy this life and death struggle and showed them faked vulnerability. Only when a knight tried to run away would the Death Knight become serious and deal a fatal blow.

The first knight who tried to escape was Rilick. A good-natured man, but after a few drinks he became a mean drunk. His head and limbs were instantly separated. They only needed to see it twice to understand that the Death Knight was not willing to let them escape, so no one dared to try again. Their attacks were ineffective and trying to run away meant instant death.

There was only one road left to take and that was to be toyed with until they die. Although they all wore full-cover helmets that were hiding the faces underneath, but by now everyone should have realized their fate. These adult men started crying like children. They came to bully the weak but never in their life would they have imagined that they would suffer the same fate.

“God, please help me…”

“God…”

Several people choking back tears could be heard to asking for God's blessing. Feeling powerless, Londes almost knelt down as well in order to start cursing or beg for a godly intervention. “You, you guys, hurry up and block that monster!” While the Knight who realized their impending fate started to pray, their prayers were suddenly interrupted by a piercing screech. The person who said this was the knight currently closest to the death knight. Wanting to avoid the bodies of his two dead companions next to him, the way he constantly trembled from tiptoeing around them was quite amusing.

Londes watched everything with a distressed look and started to frown. Because they were wearing full-cover helmets it was impossible to see their faces and with their voice out of tune due of fear it was hard to determine who issued this order. But with this kind of attitude, only one person could be responsible.

…Captain Belius. Londes' expression twisted. Because of his lechery, Belius tried to rape one of the village girls and clashed with her father who tried to save her. After they pulled the man away, Belius vented his anger on him by repeatedly thrusting his sword into the villager… He was that kind of person. The only reason he was able to join this force was because of the gold of his family, which was wealthy and owned many estates in their country. Having a man like that become captain, this could only be called unlucky.

“I can't just die here, people! You will go and buy me some time! Become a shield to protect me!” No one took action. Although he was captain in name, he wasn't respected. Who would sacrifice their live for this kind of man? Only the Death Knight showed a reaction to his loud shouting and slowly turned towards Belius.

“Yi—!” Standing next to a Death Knight and still being able to scream loudly could be considered as a remarkable feat. Londes couldn't help but feel admiration considering this strange situation, but then he heard Belius scream again: “Money, I'll give you guys’ money. Two hundred gold coins! No, five hundred gold coins!”

The bounty he proposed was a very high amount, but at this moment it was just like asking them to jump from a 500-meter cliff and only if they were able to survive would they be given the reward. While no one took action, only one person was moving… No, it should be said that it was half a person. It almost looked like he wanted to answer.

“Opppooooooo—” The right half of the knight who was cut in half grabbed Belius ankle. Its mouth spat out blood and groaned: “Oooaaaaaaaahhhhhh!” Belius started screaming, and the nearby knights and villagers who saw what happened couldn't stop their bodies from becoming stiff with horror.

‘Zombie Slave’. In Yggdrasil, when a death knight kills its target they would become an undead as well and immediately revive as a zombie at the place they were killed. If you died through the sword of a Death Knight, you would become its minion for eternity. That was the game's setting. Belius stopped screaming and fell to the ground like a puppet whose strings were cut. He probably passed out. The Death Knight moved close to the unconscious man and thrust out the corrugated blade in his hands.

Belius body was stabbed, “Wooooohhhhhhhhhhh—” And woken by the pain, Belius let out an ear-splitting scream. “Let, let me go! I am begging you! I will do anything you ask!” Belius hands grasped the corrugated sword stabbed inside his body, but the Death Knight ignored his words. Instead, it started to move the sword up and down like a saw. Along with the body armor that was brutally shredded, blood was flying everywhere.

“Aaargh— I, I'll give you money, let, let me—” Belius body shakes a few times and finally draws his last breath and Death Knight leaves Belius body with satisfaction. “No… No… No.”

“God!” Because of the scene happening in front of them, his shocked companions wailed in anguish. To run would mean to lose one's life, but to stay would mean a fate worse than death. Although they were well aware of this, they had no idea what to do and thus their bodies were unable to move a single step.

“Calm down!” Londes' roar echoed from the wails. The area became silent, as if time had stopped. “Retreat! Hurry and send the signal, call the horsemen and bow cavalry back here! While the horn is blown, the remaining people here try to buy some time! I for one don't want to die this way, get moving!”

Everyone sprang into action. Gone was the bewilderment from before, everyone worked as one and moved with the momentum of a splashing waterfall. Mechanically following orders, they stopped thinking and tried to make a miracle happen. The chaotic actions from before would not happen a second time. All the knights knew what they had to do. They needed to protect the one in charge of blowing the horn, in order to contact the other knights. The retreating knight put down his sword and took out a horn from his bag.

“Ohahhhhhhhh!” Apparently the action of taking out the horn was a signal for action, the Death Knight began to run. Its target was the knight who took out the horn, everyone's heart dropped, their opponent's plan was to destroy their only means of escape, wasn't that completely ruthless? The pitch black whirlwind was approaching them relentlessly and the knights knew that standing in front to block it would mean instant death.

However, everyone still advanced to form a defensive wall. Using an even more intense fear to kill their fear of what was front of them, they stood there and blocked. With one swing of the shield, a knight would be sent flying. With one flash of the sword, another knight would be cut in half.

“Ditz! Morite! Quickly cut off the heads of those that died. If you don't, they will come back to life as zombies!” The knights who were singled out hurried towards their brutally murdered companions. The shield swung again, more knights flew and the sword slashed easily through another knight. In a flash four knights had died. Although Londes felt fear, he took his sword and stood before the black whirlwind, ready to heroically sacrifice himself like a martyr.

“Ohhhhhh!!” Even if there was no chance of winning, Londes did not intend to sit still and, shouting a battle cry, used all his strength as he swung his sword towards the Death Knight. Maybe it was because this was his final chance, but Londes broke his own limits and released a strength that surprised even himself, this might've been the best slash he ever did in his whole life. The Death Knight also slashed out his corrugated sword. After a flash, Londes' eyes spun… To see his own headless body tumbling onto the ground. Londes' sword flew in an arc through the air. And at the same time, the sound of a horn could be heard.

♦ ♦ ♦

Momonga… Ainz turned his head towards the village where he could hear the sound of a horn being blown… On the ground around him were the bodies of the knights guarding the village surrounding. The surroundings reeked with the smell of blood because Ainz was in the middle of greedily experimenting and at this moment he cursed at himself for mixing up his priorities. Ainz threw his sword onto the ground. It originally belonged to one of the knights lying on the ground and its sharpened blade was stained with dirt.

“…I already mentioned it, but I'm really envious of its physical damage resistance and its ability to reduce the damage it receives.”

“Ainz Ooal Gown-sama.”

“…Ainz is fine, Albedo.” Hearing Ainz's wish how he wanted to be referred to, Albedo was somewhat confused: “Guuuguuuhuuuh! Can, can I really?! To refer to the Supreme Leader of the 41 Rulers of Nazarick, who is even using the name meant for the 41 masters of Nazarick for himself, with a nickname would be too disrespectful!”

Ainz thought this wasn't a big deal. Since Albedo thought otherwise, it showed she held the name of Ainz Ooal Gown in high esteem. Ainz felt quite happy about it and responded in a gentler tone: “Well, it's okay Albedo. Until my past companions appear again, this will be my name and I allow you to call me by that.”

“Okay, no, no let me add an honorific. How, how about… -sama, Ainz-sama, Hehehe… Right, this is it…” Albedo shyly twisted her body. Because she was still wearing her full body armor which covered her beautiful face Ainz thought she looked really strange.

“Could, could it be, heheheh… Because I… I am more special, that I can call you…”

“No, calling me such a lengthy name every time is a bit awkward, so I just want to make it shorter for everyone.”

“…So this… Yes… You are right…” After hearing this reason, Albedo's mood instantly hit rock bottom. Feeling a little uneasy, Ainz asked her: “… Albedo, when you call my name, what do you think of it?”

“I think the name fits you perfectly and I love—*cough*, it shows the integrity of you, our Supreme Master, very well.”

“…This name originally belonged to all our 41 members, including your creator Tabula Smaragdina. I disregarded your other masters and assumed this name without permission. Considering this, how do you think they would feel about this?”

“…Although it might offend you… Please allow me to say these words. If it upsets Ainz-sama, you may even order me to end my own life… If Momonga-sama were to use that name, I'm sure that the other rulers who have left us behind would have their own opinions about it. However, during the time the other masters abandoned us, only Momonga-sama stayed until the very end, so if he were to use that name we would certainly feel overjoyed.”

Albedo bowed her head and Ainz was speechless. Only the words “abandoned us” were echoing in his mind. His past companions all had their own reasons for leaving. Yggdrasil was just a game, there was no reason to abandon their real lives for it. This was true for Momonga as well. But to abandon Ainz Ooal Gown and also the Great Tomb of Nazarick, wouldn't one feel some anger towards those past companions? They even abandoned him.

“…Perhaps they will, perhaps they won't. People's emotions are rather complicated… There is no correct answer… Lift your head Albedo. I understand your intentions. I decided… This shall be my name. Until my companions come forth and object to it, the name Ainz Ooal Gown shall refer to me.”

“Yes, my Supreme Master… For my most beloved person to use such a noble name is indeed very pleasing.” Her most beloved person… Ah. The uneasy Ainz decided to ignore this problem for the moment.

“…Is that so. Thank you.”

“So Ainz-sama, do you want to spend some time here? Though just standing beside Ainz-sama and accompanying you is satisfying… Yes, taking a walk would also be fine.” This couldn't be done since Ainz came here to rescue the village. The parents, which the sisters begged him to save, had already been found dead. Remembering their bodies, Ainz scratched his head. Seeing their bodies, Ainz's reaction was like seeing dead bugs on the street, not feeling any pity, sadness or anger. “Well, leaving the walk aside, there is currently nothing urgent coming up. The Death Knight also appears to be dedicated to its work.”

“An undead worthy of being Ainz-sama's creation. His perfectly executed work is admirable.” Ainz utilized magic and special skills to create undead monsters. Monsters created through with Ainz' special skills were stronger than the average monster. Of course, the recently created Death Knight was a lot stronger than the average Death Knight. However, the Death Knight is at most a level thirty-five Monster. To summon Overlord Wiseman and Grim Reaper Thanatos, Ainz would have to consume his experience points.

Compared to them, the Death Knight was a small fry and since it was still able to fight, it meant that the enemy wasn't very strong. Which meant there was no danger. He actually wanted to assume a victory pose, but considering the need to play the majestic master, Ainz represses the

urge in his heart and hid his clenched hand underneath his robe. “The enemies attacking the village were too weak. We also need to confirm if there are survivors in this village.”

Before making his next move, Ainz checked to see if he remembered everything he had to do. First, he deactivated the effects of Ainz Ooal Gown's staff. Its pervasive evil aura disappeared without a trace, like candles blown away by the wind. Next, Ainz pulled a mask out of his item box that was able to cover his entire head. It had excessive decorations and an expression that was difficult to describe, it was neither crying nor angry. It looked surprisingly similar to one of the Barong masks in Bali.

Although the mask looked strange, it didn't have any hidden power at all. It was just an event item that couldn't even have data crystals installed into it. During Christmas Eve, if you logged into Yggdrasil during 07:00 to 22:00 and played for more than two hours… No, just by staying inside the game for two hours during that time, you would automatically receive this mask.

It could be said that this item was utterly useless. The mask's name is Mask of the Envious, also known as the Mask of Envy. Ainz had once worn this mask as well, which caused a mass flood of spam on the online messaging boards.

“Has the game company went crazy?”

“We were waiting for this.”

“One of our guild members does not have this mask, can someone PK him?”

“I am no longer human ohohoh!” those kinds of messages appear about the mask.

Next he took out a pair of metal gloves. The outer appearance was that of some crudely made iron gauntlets, nothing special. This item was called Iron Gloves and it was something the members of Ainz Ooal Gown made to change the appearance of their hands. The only ability it had was to improve strength. Wearing these items, his whole skeletal appearance was fully covered up. Ainz had his reasons why he covered up his appearance at this time around.

That was because Ainz realized he made a fatal mistake. In Yggdrasil, Ainz was already so used to looking at his skeletal appearance that it was no longer frightening to him. However, for the people of this world, Ainz's appearance was the perfect embodiment of terror.

Whether it was the two girls who almost got killed, or the fully armed knight, everyone was afraid of him. In short, using items to change his appearance from Evil Monster into Evil Mage should be enough. In the end he didn't know where to put the staff so he decided to just take it with him. It shouldn't be that much of a problem.

“Well, from here on its all up to God now, if I had known that I wouldn't have started killing these people.” Ainz threw out a line only atheist would say, made a praying sign with his hand and the dead bodies disappeared with a glowing light, before he activated his next spell. “「Flight」.” Ainz slowly floated up into the air. Before long, Albedo could be seen floating beside him. “Death Knight, if any knights are still alive, do not kill them. They still have some value.” Listening to Ainz's orders, the Death Knight accepted his command.

However, what the Death Knight was feeling when he responded to his new order was rather difficult to describe. Ainz flew at high speeds towards the location the horn had been blown. The winds blew against his body, never in Yggdrasil did he ever fly this fast. Although he felt uncomfortable with his long robe pressing against his body, he only had to endure it for a short time.

Soon he was floating in the air above the village and from there he overlooked the situation. Ainz noticed how the square looked as if it was flooded with a dark, black liquid. There were several bodies sprawled on the ground next to the shaking bodies of some knights, and standing in front of them was the Death Knight. Ainz counted the dying and glanced at the surviving knights who looked like they could barely move… A group of four. That was more than he needed, but it didn't really matter if there were more.

"Death Knight, that's enough." The tone of this voice was slightly out of place, it as casual as a boss telling a store what he wanted to buy, and for Ainz this situation was exactly like casually walking into a store and buying something. Accompanied by Albedo and Ainz slowly floated down to the ground. The collapsed knights were stunned by their arrival. They were obviously waiting for reinforcements, but the people who came were not the ones they wanted to see and their hope was completely shattered.

"This is our first meeting, honorable knights, I am called Ainz Ooal Gown." No one responded. "If you surrender now you may keep your lives. And maybe fight another day…" One of the swords was immediately thrown down. Soon there were four swords, messily thrown onto the ground. During this time no one spoke a word. "…You look tired. But considering you are standing in front of the Death Knight's master, your heads seem to be a bit too high."

The knights quickly knelt onto the floor, with their heads hanging down. They didn't look like knights bowing before their king, instead they appeared like prisoners waiting for their execution. "…I will allow you to leave with your lives. But I would like for you to go to your masters and… Convey a message." Ainz used 'Flight' to float close to where one knight was and used his staff to gently remove the knight's helmet. From behind his mask he looked into the weary eyes of the knight.

"Do not cause any trouble here. If you choose to not listen to my advice, next time you and your country will burn together." The trembling knight constantly nodded, the image of him trying so hard looked fairly amusing. "Now go. Remember to tell your masters." With a movement of his chin, the knights fled.

"…What a tiring act." Ainz softly complained while looking at the backs of the retreating knights. If there were no villagers around, he would actually relax his shoulders. Although it was similar in the Great Tomb of Nazarick, putting on an act full of majesty like that was extremely stressful for a normal office worker like Ainz. But his act still wasn't over, he still had to put on another mask. Ainz held back a sigh and walked towards the villagers, while Albedo followed him with her clanking armor.

Tidy up the zombie slaves. Ainz ordered the Death Knight in his mind while he approached the villagers and he became gradually able to see the mixture of confusion and anxiety on their faces. It was not that they were dissatisfied about the knights being allowed to flee, it was just that the person in front of them was scarier than the knights. Ainz finally realized the situation he was in…

Since he was strong, even stronger than those knights, he never considered the villager's point of view. Ainz collected himself and thought for a moment. Since it would be counterproductive if he got too close, Ainz stopped some distance away from them and addressed them with used a gentle tone: “You are safe now, don't worry.”

“You, you are…” One of the villagers, who seemed to be their representative, spoke up but even at this time their eyes did not leave the Death Knight. “I saw people attacking the village, so I came to help.”

“Ohhh…” With a startled noise, everyone started to look relieved. However, not all of the villagers gathered here were completely at ease. There's no helping it. Maybe it would it be better if I changed my approach? Ainz decided to use an approach he didn't like. “…Having said that, my services are not for free. I would like to receive a reward for every surviving villager, understood?”

The villagers looked at each other, seemingly uneasy about the money. But from Ainz's perspective, it seemed like the last skeptical looks of the villagers were slowly fading away. They were saved because of money and this thought slightly eliminated some of their doubts.

“But, but the state of the village…” Ainz raised his hand and stopped the other party from continuing: “Let us talk about this later. During my arrival, I saved a pair of sisters. I shall go and bring those two here, would you please wait for me?” He had to make sure that the sisters kept his secret, he couldn't allow them to tell anyone about his true appearance. Ainz slowly walked away without waiting for the villager's response. At the same time, he thought that he should be able to use magic to change their memories.

第四章 衝突

Chapter 4: Conflict

Part 1

The home of the Village Chief was near the village square, and right past the entrance was a large, open workspace next to a kitchen. Inside this empty living room stood a shabby table with several chairs around it. Ainz was sitting on one such chair and observed the interior. Shining through the lattice windows, the sun illuminated every corner of the house. Even without the use of 'Night Vision' it was possible to clearly see the surroundings.

Ainz watched the woman standing in the kitchen corner and the various tools lying around the house. No mechanical appliances could be seen anywhere. When Ainz started considering that science and technology were less developed in this world, he immediately realized that his expectations were a bit naive.

Even with magic, science wouldn't necessarily advance quickly. In order to avoid the sun, Ainz cautiously moved his hand on the old table. The simple work table started to wobble even though the metal gauntlets weren't that heavy. The chair also creaked loudly, reacting to Ainz's shifting weight. In the truest meaning of the word, poor.

In order to put it out of the way, Ainz leaned his staff against the table. The staff reflected the sunlight, which created various to bright reflections. Although he was in a rundown village home, he still found himself surrounded by the illusions of a mythical world. Ainz recalled the amazed expressions of the villagers.

Upon beholding the high-end class staff Ainz and his companions had created, the villagers were in awe, causing Ainz to feel very proud. However, this fleeting feeling immediately became merely a normal level of happy, causing Ainz to furrow his non-existent eyebrows. He really disliked his forced composure. And being too scatter-brained would make it difficult for him to resolve future problems.

Reflecting on this, Ainz prepared himself for the challenge in front of him; He needed to negotiate with the Village Chief about the reward for saving the village. Ainz's true objective was gathering information rather than gold, but directly asking for information would raise suspicions. Although this small village shouldn't be too much of a problem, Ainz was still worried about the authorities of the land. If such people knew that Ainz frequently mingled with the villagers to gain information about this world, they would immediately manipulate him.

Am I being too cautious? Ainz felt like this situation was similar to dashing across the road. There was a chance that he could get into a fatal accident at any moment. In other words, there might be a chance that he would meet with the world's strongest fighters. Strength was relative. Ainz might've been stronger than anyone he had met in this village, however that didn't mean he was stronger than everyone else in this world.

Also, right now Ainz was an undead and judging from the girl's past reactions, the general disposition towards undead was very obvious. He needed knowledge about his situation and he had to be careful since he could be attacked at any time by humans who hated him.

"I kept you waiting." The Village Chief sat down on the seat across from Ainz and his wife stood behind him. The Village Chief had dark, muscular skin and a face full of wrinkles. From a glance you could tell that his robust body was forged through heavy manual labor. Half of his hair was already white. Although his cotton clothes were stained with dirt, they didn't smell. From the weary look of his face, one would guess that he was more than forty years old. His actual age however was hard to accurately discern.

Apparently the today's events caused him to age a few years. The Village Chief's wife seemed to be as old as he was. Although she formerly had the charm of a slim, delicate beauty, many years of hard farm work have washed it almost completely away. Her face was full of freckles. Now she was only a skinny, old auntie with disheveled, shoulder-length black hair. Even if viewed in the sunlight, its color would still be dull.

"Please." The old lady put a humble village cup on the table. Albedo wasn't served because she was still walking around the village. Ainz raised his hand to decline the steaming cup with the boiled water. He didn't feel thirsty and he couldn't take off his mask. But since he saw the hard work put into preparing the water, he should have declined earlier. By the way, the hard work refers to the task of boiling the water.

She started with a flint. Showering small sparks onto thin wood chips, she then let the fire grow larger. It took her a while to get the stove's fire going, and then she had to wait until the hot water boiled. She didn't use electricity, but a fire she made by hand to boil the water. This was the first time Ainz saw anything like this and, he was very interested in the process. In Ainz's original world, everyone in the past used gas to cook, so what she just did should be about as hard.

Regarding technology, Ainz wanted to use the opportunity to gather some information. Thinking this way, Ainz once again faced the Village Chief. "Even though you boiled water especially for me, I'm truly sorry."

"You are too kind, there's no need to apologize." Ainz, who is gently bowing his head to apologize, made the couple feel uneasy. They couldn't imagine that the person ordering the 'Death Knight' around would actually bow his head in order to apologize.

But this idea wasn't the least bit strange to Ainz. Showing a friendly attitude before they started the negotiations was definitely a good thing. Of course, he could always deal with it as he did with those sisters, using 'Control Humanoid' or some other magic to pry out information and later use high tier magic to change their memories.

But that kind of thing should only be used as a last resort because the mana consumption for doing that would be too high. Ainz recalled the feeling of using up mana; his body would feel oddly tired, as if it had lost something. After he put on the mask and gloves, he had to use a gigantic amount of mana just to change ten seconds' worth of memories.

"…Then let us get to the point, the discussion about my reward."

"Yes. However, before we start the negotiation… Thank you very much!" The Village Chief bowed in thanks, his head almost hitting the table. His wife also followed suit and bowed: "If it wasn't for you, all of the villagers would be dead. We are really grateful!" Ainz was surprised to receive such heartfelt gratitude.

Recalling his previous life, he never received such thanks… No, the two girls from before also thanked him like this. It was just that he never saved anyone before, and now he felt like he did the right thing. He didn't dislike receiving this kind of sincere thanks even when he was still human, although he still felt embarrassed… Perhaps this was a remnant of his humanity.

"Please raise your heads. Like I said before, this is nothing you should be concerned about. Because I wasn't helping you for free."

"We know that, but please allow us to thank you nonetheless. Because of your help many villagers were able to survive."

"…As long as they pay more. First, let's discuss the matter of the reward. As the Village Chief you should be rather busy."

"Nothing is more important than spending some time with our savior, however following my principles would be the sincerest form of respect."

The Village Chief slowly raised his head and Ainz quickly started to use his non-existent brain. To not rely on magic, but conversation to gain his information… How troublesome. How much effect would his past experiences with sales have on the situation right now? Ainz hoped he would be able to use at least half of his old skills. Having mentally prepared himself, he spoke: "…Then I'll get straight to the point, how much can you pay me?"

"We cannot afford to be stingy for our savior. Regarding copper and silver coins, if we do not collect from everyone, we are unsure how much we have, but as for copper coins, we should have about 3,000 now."

Ainz still didn't know how much that was worth, so he ridiculed himself in his heart. Asking right now would be a fatal mistake, he should take a different approach and slowly guide the subject. *Anyways, since I was a useless salesman originally, my business skills were also very poor.*

Although the number felt like a lot, but he did not know the value of the money, and thus could not determine whether this amount was appropriate. He absolutely has to avoid accepting too low a number or raise the number too high, otherwise he will expose his own ignorance.

No, the fact that they didn't say that they would give him four large cows was enough to make him breathe a sigh of relief. About to fall deep into depression, his mental state quickly settled down. Ainz reassured himself, he was really thankful for his undead body, at the same time he learnt something. And that was, copper coins and silver coins were this village's main currency. At the same time, he also wanted to know where do these two currencies stand against each other, but he had no confidence about this information.

First he had to learn more about the value of copper coins. Not knowing something basic could become rather troublesome. But to know nothing about the value of currency would be extremely

suspicious. Before he started wanting to learn more about this world, he wanted to keep a low profile. So that was why he kept on thinking, trying to avoid an even greater failure.

“It would be hard to carry so many small coins, I hope can be exchanged with coins of a bigger value.”

“Forgive us, it would be great if we could use gold coins to pay you. But… Our village doesn’t have any gold coins…” Ainz suppressed the urge to heave a sigh of relief. The Village Chief’s answer turned the conversation into the direction Ainz wanted. So Ainz thought harder about his next question: “So it’s like that. In that case, I simply wish to use the money I receive to buy goods from the village, I just want you to give me enough for that purpose.”

Ainz secretly opened his Item Chest from within his robes and removed two Yggdrasil gold coins from it. One of the coins had a woman’s profile while the other had the profile of a man. The first coin was introduced after the ‘Valkyrie’s Downfall’ event, it was a revision of the currency used by the players until then, while the latter coin was the old currency that was used before.

Although both coins had the same value, both of them had different meanings for Ainz. The older coin had accompanied Ainz from the moment he first started playing Yggdrasil until the founding of Ainz Ooal Gown. It was during the peak of his guild’s activity when the game introduced the new coins, but since they had already completed all their equipment, the new coins were simply put into their Item Chests.

Becoming a skeleton mage, using magic to defeat monsters on the map and receiving gold coins which floated in the air. Going into a labyrinth on his own and defeating ferocious monsters on his own, obtaining a mountain of gold coins through great difficulty. After his guild members went through the labyrinth, sold all of their gained data crystals, earning these gold coins symbolizing their glorious history… But Ainz threw away those nostalgic memories. Keeping the old coin, he took out the new coin.

Once he placed the gold coin on the table, the Village Chief and his wife both opened their eyes in surprise. “Thi-This is!”

“This is the currency of a faraway land. Can it be used here?”

“It should be possible… Please wait a moment.” Ainz heaved a sigh of relief after hearing that it could be used, in the meantime the Village Chief left his seat, went into another room and brought something back you would only see in a history book. That would be an antique balancing scale.

Next was the wife’s job, she took the gold coin along with a round object, seemingly comparing their size. After she saw enough, she placed the coin on one side of the scale and placed a scale weight on the other. This looked like a process called 'weighing currency'. Ainz dug through his memories, thinking over the meaning of the wife’s actions.

If the first step would be comparing the size of this country’s currency to the other, then the next should be confirming the gold content of the coin. It looked like the gold coin was heavier, since the weight on the other side of the scale began to rise. The wife puts another weight on the scale in order to balance both sides.

“Looks like it’s about the weight of two gold coins… Please, may I ask if it is possible to scratch the surface…”

“Wi-Wife, you are being too rude! Please forgive us, my wife has said some insolent words…” She seemed to think that the coin was gold plated. However, Ainz wasn’t really unhappy, or angry. “Go ahead… But if it’s really made of pure gold, you better compensate me with its full value, okay?”

“N-No need, I am really sorry.” The Village Chief’s wife apologized and returned the coin. “Don’t mind it, I want to know something else. What are your thoughts about this coin? It looks like a carved sculpture, right?”

“Yes, it looks very nice. Which country is this currency from?”

“Now this… This country doesn’t exist anymore.”

“Oh, really…”

“…Although it has the same weight as two common gold coins, coupled with the artwork one should expect a rather high value, am I right?”

“That might be… But I’m no merchant and don't know how to properly judge an artworks’ worth…”

“Hahaha, you are right. So if I were to go shopping, this coin would be the equivalent of two common gold coins right?”

“Well, of course.”

“Actually, I have several such coins. What kind of goods can you sell me? Of course, I’ll only buy as much as you’re willing to provide and it doesn’t matter to me if I have to pay the normal prices. You can even freely check out the coins. Please…”

“Ainz Ooal Gown-sama!”

Ainz was startled by the Village Chief’s sudden shout, whose expression had become even more serious than before. “…Calling me Ainz is enough.”

“So it is Ainz-sama?” The Village Chief was very skeptical at beginning, but after nodding several times he continued: “I am well aware of what Ainz-sama is trying to say.” Becoming rather confused, Ainz wondered if a big question mark would pop up above his head. This must be a misunderstanding, but since he had no idea what the Village Chief was planning to say Ainz had no idea on how to react.

“I am well aware that Ainz-sama does not want to sell himself short, since it is understandable that you expect a fitting reward for your hard work. To hire a person as powerful as Ainz-sama, we would need a lot of money, but you would like to receive something else in addition to the three thousand copper coins, am I right?”

Being unable to follow Village Chief's train of thought, Ainz's mind was in a mess and he couldn't help being grateful he decided to wear this mask. Ainz took out the gold coins in order to estimate how much he would be able to buy with it since he wanted to roughly evaluate the market prices in this world. How did things turn out like this?

Without giving Ainz time to speak up, the Village Chief continued: "However, just as I said before, the maximum amount this village can pay is around three thousand copper coins. You will certainly suspect there is more, but I can definitely assure you that we aren't hiding anything from our savior Ainz-sama." The Village Chief's face was full of sincerity and it didn't look like he was lying. If he was deceiving Ainz, Ainz could only blame for his own inability to read people's standing.

"No, we would never be able to gather the proper amount of money to pay a person as powerful as Ainz-sama. If everyone in the village gathered all their money, perhaps we might be able to satisfy Ainz-sama, but… our village has lost many people, if we were to pay you more than these 3000 copper coins we wouldn't be able to survive the next season. It is the same with material goods, many fields will be short of hands because of our losses. So if we gave our supplies to you now, our future would be quite bleak. Although it is rude towards our savior, but if it is remotely possible… Could we pay you back via instalments?"

Huh? Could this be a great opportunity? Having a moment of enlightenment, Ainz pretended to go into deep thought. His objective was right in front of him, now he could only pray to be successful. After a few seconds, Ainz finally spoke: "I understand. I won't ask for a reward."

"Huh? Wh… Why?" The Village Chief and his wife were dumbfounded. Ainz gently raised his hand, signaling that he still had something to say. During negotiations one had to properly consider what to say and what not to say, this was really troublesome and he didn't know whether it was possible to smoothly get the information he desired, but he still had to try.

"…I am a magic caster, after learning magic in a place called Nazarick I only ventured outside a short time ago."

"I see. So that's the reason you are dressed that way."

"Ah, er. Yes." Ainz touched the Mask of Envy, casually wiping his brow. If all magic casters wore these kinds of mask, how would the people on the street react? The image of Bali's bursting streets popped up in his mind. Ainz who didn't expect to land in this world, suddenly noticed another thing he couldn't understand.

He wondered why they used the same titles as in Yggdrasil. The title of magic caster was extremely common. It included Holy Hermits, Priests Druids, Mystics, Sorcerers, Magicians, Bards, Mikos, Alchemists, Saints and other classes. All of these classes in Yggdrasil were known as magic casters. If it was the same for this world, that would be an incredible coincidence.

Ainz continued to observe their reactions while he spoke: "…Although I said I don't want a reward, as a magic caster I use a variety of different tools, and of course that includes fear and knowledge. These can be used as tools to make money. As I said before, because I was single-mindedly concentrating on my magic studies, I reached the point where I don't really understand what is currently happening in the area, so I wanted to get information from you two.

Furthermore, I hope you won't tell anyone else about the matter of me buying information. I'd be willing to consider this as a substitute for my reward."

There's no such thing as a free lunch. If something is free, then there has to be a catch somewhere. After demanding a reward for saving these people, he suddenly changed his mind and no longer wanted to receive a reward. This would obviously cause some people to become suspicious about him. But as long as the other party believed they had paid a proper reward, even if it was intangible, they would still be influenced by it.

In other words, if the other party believes they sold information to Ainz as a reward, they would become less suspicious and feel more at ease. In fact, the Village Chief and his wife gave off a firm expression and nodded their head: "I understand, we definitely won't tell anyone about this." Ainz clenched his fists and secretly celebrated. His real-life business experiences were actually useful here.

"That's great. Since I don't wish to use magic to restrain you, I will believe in your integrity." Ainz stretched out his gauntlet covered hand. At first, the Village Chief was stunned for a second and after realizing the intention he firmly gripped Ainz's hand in a handshake. Ainz was relieved that this world also had a tradition of shaking hands. If the Village Chief had made a questioning face, he really would've cried. Of course, Ainz didn't trust them completely.

Regarding matters you don't want people to speak about, the moment they were offered better benefits they would certainly leak the information in question. Even if a secret was kept at first, it was still possible for it to be leaked after the person in question had a change of mind. Since there was no such thing as a 'best solution', Ainz just had to take a gamble, believing that the Village Chief's integrity was strong enough to not leak the information.

He couldn't really do anything to prevent that from happening and even if the information was leaked, he could still use it as a bargaining chip for the next time he had to deal with this village but after looking at their grateful expressions and their sincere attitudes, Ainz's intuition told him they would probably never betray him. "So… Can you clearly tell me about this place?"

♦ ♦ ♦

"…How could this be?"

"Eh! Is there a problem?"

"No, nothing, I was just talking to myself. Sorry for making strange noises, causing you to worry…" Ainz instantly resumed his original acting. If he still had his human body, he would've broken out in cold sweat right now. The Village Chief just said "Oh, so it's like this." and didn't pursue the matter. Or maybe in his mind, he already thought of the magic caster as a strange person. This would actually be more advantageous for Ainz…

"Should I prepare you something to drink?"

"Oh, no, I'm not thirsty, please do not bother." The chief's wife had already left the room and went outside. There were a lot of things that needed to be done. At the moment only the Village Chief and Ainz are in the house. Ainz first questions were about the neighboring countries and he never even heard of the names mentioned by the Village Chief.

Although he prepared himself psychologically, saying to himself that nothing will surprise him, but he was still surprised after hearing it… At the beginning, Ainz constantly imagined that this world was based on the lore of Yggdrasil. Since you could use Yggdrasil magic in this world, perhaps it was somewhat related to Yggdrasil.

However, the names he heard had absolutely no relation to it. The neighboring countries were the Kingdom of Re-Estize, the Baharuth Empire and the Slane Theocracy. In the Nordic mythology and lore of Yggdrasil, these names didn't appear. His eyes were constantly shifting and his body was shaky. Ainz put his metal-gloved hands on the table and was barely able to keep his balance.

He already knew that he arrived in a strange world and was mentally prepared for it, but it was impossible to not be surprised. The impact was worse than expected. This was the first time ever since his body became undead that he felt such a dramatic impact. Trying to stay calm, Ainz recalled the names of those neighboring countries he just heard and their geographical conditions.

Beginning with the closest ones, Re-Estize Kingdom and Baharuth Empire. These two countries were separated by the Azellerisia mountain range. To the south of the mountains was a large vast forest which belonged to the Kingdom. This village and the nearby fortress city were both located at the edge of the forest. These two countries were constantly fighting against each other and there were skirmishes almost every year in the wilderness near the fortress city. As for the country in the south, that was the Slane Theocracy.

To explain the relationship between these three countries in simpler term, it was like drawing a circle and putting an upside down "T" in the center. This explanation might be a bit vague but it should be easy to understand. The Kingdom of Re-Estize on the left, the Baharuth Empire on the right and the Slane Theocracy to the south. There appeared to be other countries but the Village Chief only knew only about those three. As for political events, there was no way for the chief of a small village to know more. Which means…

"…Just now I made a fool of myself." Just because the armor of the knights bore the emblem of the Baharuth Empire, the Village Chief had assumed they were Baharuthian knights. But since this place was bordering the Slane Theocracy, they might have just as well been Slane knights in disguise. Releasing all the knights had been a mistake, he should've kept at least one person to ask some questions. Now it was too late for that. If this had really been the doing of the Slane Theocracy, then maybe he should warn the Empire.

As for the Kingdom, since the villagers had been saved everything should be alright. Ainz was deep in thought. Was he the only one who came to this world? That was impossible, the chances for other players to be here as well should be high. Perhaps Herohero also came here. The next step should be considering what to do in case he encountered other players.

From a Japanese person's point of view, if other players got transported here as well then they should stick together. It would be best to cooperate as much as possible with each other when that happened. As long it had nothing to do with Ainz Ooal Gown, it wouldn't matter what of concessions he would have to make. The only problem would be if the other party considered him as an enemy. Although the probability for that to happen was very small, it wasn't completely impossible.

Ainz Ooal Gown had always played the role of the bad guys and had been PKing all the time. As a result, they were generally disliked. It wasn't clear if that resentment has disappeared or not. Maybe the other party would try to bring him to justice, driven by their anger and hate. In order to prevent being hated, he first had to try to avoid hostile behaviors in the surrounding area. Massacring the local residents, especially innocent people, would very likely enrage other players who had yet to lose their humanity.

Of course, if he could provide the other side with a good reason for his acts, it might become a different matter. Saving attacked villagers from being killed for example. All his future actions had to be justified with commendable reasoning rather than convenience. In other words, it was possible that next time he had to do things he didn't want to do, but there was no way around it. Still, if the other party still felt lingering resentment towards Ainz Ooal Gown because of the past, then fighting would become unavoidable. So he must draft out a countermeasure for that situation.

As for the fighting force of the Great Tomb of Nazarick, if the opponent had around thirty level 100 players, he should be able to easily destroy them. Since he was also able to use the legendary items stored inside the Great Tomb of Nazarick, it could be compared to an impregnable fortress. If the enemies were only just as strong as those knights, then it should be easy for Nazarick to repel them.

But as one could imagine, fighting in a fortress without receiving reinforcements would be a very disadvantageous situation. Using Ainz Ooal Gown's legendary items would make it very easy to kill them, but Ainz' level would be reduced every time he released its maximum power. If he used it to repel every attack, there would be a day when he became unable to use them.

Ainz understood how easy it was to make mistakes or to not notice certain things when he just concentrated on fighting. But Ainz wasn't a child, and so he would take the worst case scenarios into account before he started to act. That way he could think of counter-measures before the problem even occurred. If he just wanted to live, then he wouldn't need to think so much.

He could just be like a beast and live in the forest. But because of his strength and the proud name he was wearing right now he couldn't allow himself to do so. If he wanted to live peacefully with others, he would just have to improvise. Therefore, it became an important as to how he would face combat in the future. He had to properly expand his military strength. Next he had to gather information about this world, including any news about other players.

"…This should be sufficient."

"Is there anything wrong?"

"No, it's nothing. It's just that my predictions were different from reality, so I forgot myself. Right, are there any other matters you can tell me about?"

"Ah, yes I understand." The Village Chief's talk changed to the subject of monsters.

This world was the same as in Yggdrasil in the aspect that they both have monsters. Inside forests, there were magical beasts as well, in particular in the area called "Forest of the Sage Kings". There were also dwarves, dryads, fairies, goblins, orcs, ogres and other demi-humans. There was even a demi-human country established somewhere.

There were those called ‘adventurers’, who receive rewards for defeating these creatures. Among them there were many magic casters. They also established an Adventurer’s Guild within the city. In addition, there seems to be a way to gather the relevant information in the Fortress City of E-Rantel.

According to the Village Chief, E-Rantel appeared to be the largest nearby city, even if it was unclear exactly how many people lived there. If he wanted to gather information, that would be the place. Even though the information shared by the Village Chief were useful, there were still many things he didn’t know about. In order to clarify this, it would be faster to just send someone there to check.

Finally, about the language. Although this seemed to be another world, it was strange how they could still understand Japanese. So Ainz carefully looked at the Village Chief’s mouth and realized they were not speaking Japanese at all. The shape of the mouth and the resulting sounds, all of them didn’t seem to be Japanese. He should experiment on this later.

In conclusion, it appeared the people of this world once ate some kind of food called ‘Translation Konjac’. It was just that there was no idea who fed it to them. It seemed like the languages of this world would be translated automatically before it was transmitted to the other person.

So, if everyone was able to understand each other, then it should be possible to speak to other species as well. Such as talking to dogs or cats. The only problem was that nobody knew who made it this way. But for some reason, the Village Chief didn’t think that this was strange in any way. As if it was something completely ordinary.

In other words, this was the common sense of this world. Thinking calmly about it, since this was a magical world, the fact that there would be a completely different common sense wasn’t strange at all. The common sense he learnt throughout his past life and the common sense of this world was completely different.

This was a fatal problem. If he wasn’t familiar with the common sense of this world, it was possible for him to commit a fatal blunder. The trait “lack of common sense”, was definitely a bad thing. Presently, Ainz was missing this common sense. He had to think of a solution, but since he couldn’t think of a good idea, should he just go to find a random person and get him to spit out all of his common sense to him? Of course not. It looked like there was only one way.

“…It seems I will have to live in a city for a while.” Many things will require him to learn about the common sense of this world. It was also important to understand the magic of this world. There were simply a lot of things you needed to know. Deep in thought, Ainz heard the sound of gentle steps approaching the thin wooden door from outside.

Although the footsteps were heavy, the time between each step indicated that they did not move quickly. They were the footsteps of a person who wasn’t in a hurry. The moment Ainz turned his face in the direction of the door, somebody knocked on the door.

The Village Chief couldn’t help but observe Ainz's face. Since the price for saving their lives was to explain things, he didn’t dare to leave without Ainz’s consent. “Please go ahead. I just wanted to take a break anyway, so it doesn’t matter if you want to leave.”

“I am very, very sorry about this.” The Village Chief gently nodded to apologize, stood up and walked towards the door. A villager appeared at the door, who first looked at the Village Chief and then towards Ainz: “Chief, I'm sorry to bother you while you are talking with your guest, but the funeral is ready…”

“Oh…” The chief’s gaze moved to Ainz, as if he was requesting his permission. “It doesn’t matter, don’t mind me.”

“Thank you. Tell everyone I'll be right there.”

Part 2

The funeral was held in the cemetery at the outskirts of the village. The cemetery itself consisted of a shabby fence which enclosed an open space, with several vertical round stones that had names engraved on them. The Village Chief read an epitaph to console the souls of the recently departed. He spoke of gods who didn’t exist in Yggdrasil and prayed that the souls may rest in peace.

Apparently they couldn't bury all the bodies due to a shortage of manpower, so they only buried a portion of them. From Ainz’s perspective, burying someone on the same day they died was a bit premature. Perhaps this world had religious practices unknown to Ainz and burying someone quickly was considered normal.

The villagers were all gathered inside the cemetery, among them Ainz also saw the two sisters he rescued, Enri and Nemu Emmot. Ainz confirmed that the two corpses over there are their parents; apparently their burial would take place soon. Ainz observed them from a nearby position while embracing a thirty centimeter wand beneath his robe. The wand was made from ivory, decorated with gold at the tip. Its grip was engraved with runes and gave off a divine scent. The wand's name was ‘Resurrection Wand’.

With this magic item it was possible to bring the dead back to life. Ainz obviously had more than one wand. He even had enough of them to resurrect all the dead in this village and leftovers to spare. According to the Village Chief, there was no magic in this world that could revive the dead. If Ainz were to use the resurrection wand, he could create a miracle in this village. But after the prayers were concluded and the funeral was coming to an end, Ainz slowly put the wand back into the item box. He could resurrect the dead, but did not do so.

It wasn’t because he believed that it was God’s job to manage deceased spirits, but rather because there was no point in doing so. Consider the two types of magic casters, those who could use magic to kill and those who could use magic to resurrect others. It’s easy to imagine which one would be more likely to be involved with trouble. Even if they were resurrected with the condition to not tell anyone about it, the chances of keeping everything secret were small. Everyone longed for the ability to defy death, right?

Under different circumstances he might’ve been able to cast Resurrection. But at the moment he didn’t have enough information; it was better to not use the wand. “Just the act of saving their village should be enough to make them happy.” Ainz whispered a silent prayer while gazing at the Death Knight standing behind him.

The Death Knight was another mystery. While inside Yggdrasil, summoned magical beings expire unless they were called forth by special summoning methods. This Death Knight wasn't summoned with such methods. It ought to have expired, but it didn't. Although Ainz speculated as to why, he couldn't find an explanation due to his lack of information.

While Ainz was still deep in thought, two figures appeared next him. It was Albedo and a magical being with a human-like body shape that wore a black ninja costume which had eight legs that were like keen blades. "An Eight Edge Assassin? Albedo, this is…"

Ainz looks around him. The villagers do not seem to have noticed. For now, let's disregard Albedo. If you saw such a magical being, even if you were in the middle of a funeral, it's still something you would normally stare at. But then he suddenly remembered that Eight Edge Assassins belonged to the kind of magical beings that were able to render themselves invisible.

"He wanted to pay his respects to Ainz-sama, so I brought him over."

"It is a great honor to meet Momonga-sama—"

"No need for courtesies. You are from the backup troops right?"

"Yes, apart from myself, we have prepared four hundred servants to attack this village."

Attack? How did it turn out like this? Ainz couldn't help himself and thought… *Sebas really has no talent for delivering messages.* "…There's no need to attack, the problem has already been resolved. Who is commanding you?"

"Aura-sama and Mare-sama. Demiurge-sama and Shalltear-sama are on alert inside Nazarick, and Cocytus-sama is patrolling the area around Nazarick."

"So it's like this… Too many of us would just get in the way. With the exception of Aura and Mare, everyone else shall withdraw. How many Eight Edge Assassins are here?"

"There are fifteen of us."

"In that case you are to remain on standby with Aura and Mare." Seeing the Eight Edge Assassin nodding in understanding, Ainz shifted his sight towards the funeral.

When the graves started being covered with earth, the two young girls started crying non-stop. Since it didn't look like the funerals would be ending soon, Ainz slowly walked towards the village. Albedo and Death Knight followed him. Although interrupted by the funerals, Ainz still spent a lot of time here learning things such as common sense.

After leaving the Village Chief's house, the sun was already setting in the sky. It appears that role in this heroic rescue drama took a lot of time. But he didn't consider this time wasted. As he got to know about this world, more and more unanswered questions were piling up. Learning as much as he did was enough to make him content. While looking at a beautiful sunset, Ainz thought about what he should be doing next.

It was very dangerous to act without knowing the situation in this world. The best course of action was to first collect lots of information by concealing his identity and doing covert operations. But

after rescuing this village, he was no longer able to conceal his identity. Even if the knights were completely wiped out, they belonged to a nation who would try to find out what happened.

In his old world, scientific investigation was well-developed, and perhaps this world would have other means of investigation. Even if there weren't any well-developed investigation methods, as long as the village survived, one day someone would find traces of Ainz there. In order to avoid information leaks, the villagers could be brought back to the Great Tomb of Nazarick. However, the kingdom to which these villages belong would certainly object. It wouldn't be surprising if such an incident were treated as a mass-kidnapping.

There were two reasons for stating his name and letting the knights escape. The first was because as long as Ainz wasn't hiding inside the Great Tomb of Nazarick, news about him would slowly start to spread. In that case it would be better if he was the one to disseminate the information.

The second reason was to spread the news that Ainz Ooal Gown had rescued the villagers by killing the knights. Of course, the primary intention was to let other Yggdrasil players catch wind of this. Ainz wanted to have a shelter inside the Kingdom, the Empire or the Theocracy.

On one hand, if there were other players in these countries, clues pertaining to their existence would start to surface. On the other hand, if Ainz were to mobilize all of Nazarick in order to search for these clues, not only would it take a lot of effort, but the risk would also be high. If someone had temperament like Albedo's, giving her the wrong order would certainly create an unnecessary enemy. With respect to intelligence gathering, becoming allies with one of these countries had a great deal of benefits.

In order to protect the Great Tomb of Nazarick's independence, having the backing of a strong party would be useful. But since he didn't know about the relative strengths of these countries, he judged it would be wiser to not hastily associate himself with one at the moment.

Also, since Ainz didn't know who the strongest person was in this world, he couldn't let his guard down. In these three countries, there might be someone even stronger than Ainz. Becoming a member of one of these countries might bring quite a few disadvantages, but there should be a lot of benefits as well, right? The question is, how does he gain citizenship?

If the answer was to become a slave, then no thank you. He wouldn't consider becoming a black-hearted corporate employee like Herohero either. That's why he had to reveal his presence to all forces, observe their reactions and potential offers and choose the ideal side.

These were the fundamentals of looking for a job. So when should he immigrate? As long as Ainz lacked information, there was a possibility that Ainz would be manipulated. Thinking about all this, Ainz wearily shook his head. In these past few hours, he used his brain too much. He didn't want to think anymore.

"Sigh… Let's call it a day. We're done here. Albedo, let's head back."

"Understood." Albedo's answering voice was very tense. Since no danger was present, there wasn't a need for her to be on alert. Considering this, he could only think of one reason as to why. Ainz, using a low tone, inquired: "…Do you hate humans?"

“I don’t like them. Humans are fragile and inferior creatures. If I crush them like insects, there would be a pretty sight to behold… These two girls are exceptions though.”

Even though Albedo’s voice was as sweet as honey, what she said was still very cruel. Considering that Albedo had the appearance of a warm-hearted goddess, Ainz thought that her previous sentence was at great odds with her appearance and began to admonish her: “Is that so… I understand how you feel. However, I hope you’ll calm down a bit, since knowing how to conduct oneself is very important.”

Watching Albedo nod frantically, Ainz started to worry. At this stage, Albedo’s likes or dislikes wouldn’t cause any problems, but that wasn’t necessarily true in the future. Knowing the preferences of his subordinates was a matter of great importance. After noting Albedo’s prejudice against humanity, Ainz started looking for the Village Chief. Courtesy obligated him to say his farewells before leaving.

He immediately located the Village Chief. The chief had a solemn expression and stood in a corner of the square speaking with several villagers, yet something wasn’t right. The Village Chief’s face showed a troubled expression as if something were about to happen. *Did something troublesome happen?*

Ainz repressed the urge to say goodbye. When saving someone, one should do it properly. With this thought in mind, he approached the Village Chief: “…What’s the matter, Village Chief?” The Village Chief’s face lit up with a glimmer of hope. “Oh, Ainz-sama. There seems to be people riding horses, who look like soldiers approaching this place…”

“I see…”

The Village Chief stared at Ainz with a worried look, as did all the other villagers. Ainz gently raised his hand, telling everyone to be at ease: “Leave it to me. All the villagers will seek shelter in the Village Chief’s house; the two of us will stay here.” A bell rang, and the villagers began to gather.

At the same time, Death Knight went next to the Village Chief’s home to guard it and Albedo stood next to Ainz waiting for his commands. In order to dispel the Village Chief’s anxiety, Ainz cheerfully spoke up: “Don’t worry, since this is a special case I’ll help you free of charge.” The Village Chief ceases to tremble and forces a smile. He probably had already made mental preparations to bet everything on Ainz.

After a short while, several horsemen appeared on the road and slowly paraded into the square. “…Their equipment is different and appears to be haphazardly arranged… Are these even proper soldiers?” Ainz was perplexed by their equipment. The knights from before had an imperial emblem on their armor, and they were armed with matching swords and a full set of armor.

But these horsemen, even though they were also wearing armor, had no discernible uniform. Some wore leather, while some didn’t even wear armor, exposing the chainmail vest usually worn underneath. Some wore helmets, while others did not. The only thing they had in common was that all their faces were exposed. All of them were equipped with the same kind of sword, but some carried a bow, or perhaps a pistol, a mace or other spare weapons with them.

To put it nicely, this group looked filled with veteran warriors who have seen countless battlefields. If you weren't feeling too generous, they looked like a ragtag mercenary group. In the end around twenty horsemen rode into the square. Although they were wary of the Death Knight, they were still more or less able to neatly arrange themselves in front of the Village Chief and Ainz. From within their ranks a single man emerged and rode towards Ainz. This appeared to be the leader of these men, having the most eye-catching and courageous appearance.

He slowly surveyed his surroundings, looking at the Village Chief, then at the Death Knight and then at Albedo. He looked around for quite some time. But upon realizing that the other party remained motionless, he suddenly pierced Ainz with his sharp eyes. Even while being he was stared at with such fierce eyes, Ainz remained calm and unmoving.

This kind of pressure wouldn't even cause the tiniest ripple in his heart. Not because Ainz wasn't afraid of these eyes, his imperviousness was simply a side-effect of him being an Elder Lich. Perhaps his Yggdrasil abilities allowed him to be full of self-confidence.

Having surveyed the area, the captain spoke with an imposing voice: "I am a Warrior-Captain of the Kingdom of Re-Estize, Gazef Stronoff. Under orders from the king, I have come with a punitive force to fight against the knights of the Empire and have been patrolling around various villages."

His deep, smooth voice resounded in the square and the Village Chief behind Ainz muttered: "A Warrior-Captain of the Kingdom…"

This person was never mentioned during my talk with the chief… With a slight undertone of blame directed at the Village Chief, he asked in a low voice: "…What kind of person is he?"

"According to the traders that pass through, he was the champion of a tournament held in the past, which was used to determine the King's personal guard. Presently he is a direct subordinate to the King and commands an elite group of soldiers."

"Is the person in front of me really that great…?"

"…I don't know. This is only hearsay."

Ainz carefully looked at the horsemen; they clearly had the same emblem on their chests. Their emblem looked very similar to ones here in the village. That said, there wasn't enough information and thus his identity couldn't be ascertained. Gazef looked at the Village Chief: "You must be the Village Chief. Could you tell me who the man standing next to you is?"

"Do not bother. Hello, Sir Warrior-Captain of the Kingdom, I am Ainz Ooal Gown, a magic caster. Because the villagers were attacked by knights, I came to here to rescue them."

Stopping the Village Chief who was about to answer, Ainz gently saluted, and introduced himself. Gazef quickly stepped off his horse, making a loud sound from his heavy metal armor, he stood on the ground and made a deep bow: "Thank you for saving this village, I am unable to repay your kindness."

The air shook slightly. As a Warrior-Captain, he would probably have been part of the privileged class, so showing such respect to a no-name like Ainz in a world with clear differences between

the social classes would be a huge surprise to anyone. That said, in this country, or even the entire world, human rights had yet to be fully established.

Just a few years ago, there were still countries practicing slavery. Even though their standings were completely different, Gazef still got off his horse to bow to Ainz. It was clear what type of a person Gazef is. Ainz's intuition told him that Gazef's identity as Warrior-Captain of the Kingdom wasn't fake. "…No need to be so polite. In fact, the purpose of this was to receive a reward, so there is no need for thanks."

"Oh, a reward. That is to say, you are an adventurer? Hmm… I see. Looks like you seem to be a great adventurer… But please forgive my ignorance, I have never heard the name of Master Gown before."

"I am a traveler who just happened to pass by here, so I am not a very well-known figure."

"…Currently travelling eh. I apologize for wasting the time of such an outstanding adventurer, but would it be possible for you to tell me what happened to the men who came and raided this village?"

"It would be my pleasure, Sir Warrior-Captain. Most of the knights who came and raided this village are already dead; they should be unable to cause any more trouble. Is there a need to continue explaining?"

"…Killed… Was it the by the hand of Master Gown?"

Hearing the way that Gazef addressed him, Ainz realized that names in this world were called in the Western and not the Japanese style. The sequence of a name would be given name + surname and not surname + given name. That explained why the Village Chief had shown such a strange expression when Ainz asked him to address him by Japanese custom.

Though they were not familiar with each other, Ainz still asked the other person to call him by name. Of course the Village Chief would be confused. Realizing his own mistake, Ainz still used the shameless nature he acquired as a working member of society to gloss over his faux pas.

"…That is correct, but also not correct." Keenly aware of the meaning of Ainz's words, Gazef looked towards the Death Knight, from which he could probably smell a thin scent of blood. "There are two things I want to ask… Who is that?"

"He is one of my created servants." Gazef hummed, then with sharp eyes looked at Ainz from head to toe. "In that case… What is that mask?"

"Because I am a magic caster, I have to wear this."

"Can you take it off?"

"If I do so, then that guy—", his hand pointed to the Death Knight. "If he goes out of control it would be very troublesome."

The Village Chief, along with the villagers inside the house, knew the strength of the Death Knight very well, and they all showed a surprised expression. Possibly feeling the change in the Village

Chief's mood and the surrounding atmosphere, Gazef nodded heavily: "I see, in that case it would be better to not remove the mask."

"Thank you."

"Then—"

"Before that, sorry to interrupt, but this village was just attacked by knights of the Empire. If everyone were to carry weapons and enter, it may cause the villagers to recall their recent, frightful experiences. If I may ask, would it be possible for everyone to place their weapons in the corner of the square, and consequently put the villager's minds at ease?"

"…What Master Gown has said is certainly correct. However, these swords were bestowed upon us by the king; without the king's orders we cannot lay them down."

"…Ainz-sama, we are fine with it."

"Is that so? Village Chief… Also Sir Warrior-Captain, please pardon my unreasonable request."

"Master Gown indeed has the right idea. If this sword weren't bestowed by the king, I would happily put it down. Then can we find somewhere to sit together, and would it be possible for you to recount the details of this incident? If you don't mind, the hour grows late, and I wish to rest inside the village…"

"I understand. Then shall we proceed to my home—"

While the Village Chief was answering, a knight hastily ran into the square. Panting heavily, he had urgent news to report. The knight loudly shouted an emergency situation: "Captain! There are many shadows surrounding the area. They are approaching the village!"

Part 3

"Everyone listen up." A calm, quiet voice could be heard by everyone. "The prey has entered the cage." The speaker was a man. He had a common appearance; if he was in a crowd, he wouldn't be particularly conspicuous. His only outstanding features were his black, artificial looking eyes and the scar on his face.

"Thou shalt devote thine faith to God." Everyone prayed in silence. It was a simplified prayer to God. While carrying out assignments, even within domestic borders, they had to take their time to pray. It wasn't simple, but they always had to exhibit a staunch and profound belief in God. These knights, who gave everything to the Slane Theocracy and to God, had a more profound faith than ordinary citizens. That was the reason they were able to carry out callous acts without feeling sinful. After the prayer ended, everyone's eyes became as cold as ice.

"Commence." Barely a phrase. They surrounded the village with perfectly coordinated movements, giving the impression that this was the result of constant training. They were the Slane Theocracy's knights who specialized in carrying out illegal missions, only heard of, but never seen. The Slane Theocracy had six such groups working for their intelligence agency. The typical duties of the Sunlight Scripture included the annihilation of demi-human villages.

Although they had many opportunities to do battle, their numbers were quite small. Including the scouts, they numbered less than a hundred men.

That was because the door into the Sunlight Scripture was very narrow. First, one had to be able to use holy spells of 3rd tier, as well as all the normal high tier spells that magic casters were able to learn. Additionally, they had to possess superior physical capabilities, resilience and spirit, along with a deep faith in his religion. In short, they were the cream of the crop. Watching the men around him, the man softly exhaled. Once all the men dispersed it would be difficult to grasp all of their movements. But he had complete faith in his flawless cage.

With the success of his task within his grasp, the captain of the Sunlight Scripture, Nigan Greed Luin, felt at ease in his heart. Those in the Sunlight Scripture weren't experts in covert or outfield operations, and as a result they missed four other opportunities. Every time they chased after Gazef and his group of knights, they always had been very vigilant to avoid being detected. If they missed this opportunity as well, their days of constant pursuit would continue without a doubt.

"Next time… I should ask the other teams for help and push the responsibility onto them." Someone then replied to Nigan's complaint. "That's right, our expertise is extermination after all." The person answering was one of the team members who had stayed behind to protect Nigan. "Looking at it, our task this time seems to be quite unusual. This is clearly an important assignment; it wouldn't be strange if we were to enlist the help of the Windflower…"

"You're correct. Although I do not understand the reason we were deployed this time, it's nonetheless quite a useful experience. To infiltrate the enemy ranks is indeed good training. No, perhaps this was the ultimate objective."

Although that was what he said, it was clear to Nigan that accepting a similar task in the future would be troublesome. This time his task was 'to assassinate the Kingdom's strongest warrior, the one unmatched even in the neighboring countries, Gazef Stronoff.' Generally speaking, this didn't seem like a task well-suited for the Sunlight Scripture, but rather one for the Black Scripture, which had fighters possessing strength of a heroic rank. But this time, nothing could be done about the situation.

Nigan knew the true reason the other groups couldn't assist them, but he wasn't allowed to tell his subordinates because that information was classified. The Black Scripture had to deal with the upcoming resurrection of the 'Catastrophic Dragon Lord', and were now protecting the divine artifact 'Kei Seke Koku'. The Windflower Scripture was also using all its strength to chase after the traitor who stole the Miko Princess' divine artifact, thus they had no forces left to assist him.

Nigan unconsciously stroked the scar on his face, vividly remembering the only time he had to flee like a coward. His mind recalled the face of the woman who carried the pitch-black, magically created sword that caused this scar. In most circumstances, one could completely cure any wound without leaving a scar just by using magic, but Nigan deliberately left these scars as a reminder of his defeat.

"…Damn that Blue Rose." Nigan detested the fact that Blue Rose and Gazef were both from the Kingdom. Nor could he forgive Blue Rose for being a priestess who served a different God. And there was the fact that she stopped Nigan's attempt to destroy a demi-human village. She was also the type of person Nigan loathed most, both merciful and foolish.

"…The weak must look for many methods of self-protection if they want to survive. To not even know that, how stupid." Noticing the suppressed anger in the artificial looking eyes of his leader, one of his subordinates quickly interrupted: "Bu-But the Kingdom is truly stupid." Nigan did not answer, but he agreed with that statement. Gazef was strong, so they had to weaken him by stripping him of his equipment.

The Kingdom was split into two factions, the King and the Nobility, who were constantly competing for political power. As long as they were able to get rid of Gazef, the King's pivotal piece, the nobles would be able to move easily. Even if this mission was issued due to the influence of foreign spies, it wouldn't be surprising for the higher-ups of the Kingdom to support this assassination mission.

Since Gazef was just a simple commoner who had raised through the ranks using his superior swordsmanship, he was hated by the nobles. And that was how the situation ended up like this. The kingdom's champion, killed by his own people. Nigan considered all this as really stupid behavior.

Although they, the people of the Slane Theocracy, were divided into six different religious factions, they would cooperate readily whenever the need arose. One reason was their collective respect for each other's god. Another reason was their knowledge of other races and demonic beings in this world that weren't human. It would be very dangerous if they weren't united.

"…It's important that everyone follows the same teachings and walks the same road. Humans shouldn't fight with each other; we should work together to pave a road for the future." Gazef will be sacrificed to achieve this goal. "…Do we have the ability to get rid of him?" Nigan didn't laugh at his subordinate's anxiety. The target this time was the Warrior-Captain of the Kingdom… The strongest warrior of the neighboring kingdom, Gazef Stronoff.

Compared to raiding a huge Goblin Village and killing everything, this mission was a lot more difficult. In order to soothe his subordinate's anxiety, Nigan calmly said: "There won't be any problems. Right now, he doesn't have the Kingdom's treasures because he didn't receive permission to use them. Without those treasures, killing him should take no effort at all… No, if it wasn't for this great opportunity, there would be no way to defeat him."

Warrior-Captain of the Kingdom, Gazef Stronoff, was one of the strongest knights. His superior swordsmanship made him very fearsome, but there was another reason as well. He had the right to wear the Kingdom's five treasures. At the moment the Sunlight Scripture only had information on four of them, but if Gazef were to obtain permission, he could equip all of them.

The 'Gauntlet of Endurance' that granted its bearer endless stamina. The 'Amulet of Immortality' that provided regeneration. Made of incredibly hard steel, the 'Guardian Armor' prevented any instantly killing attack. And 'Razor Edge', a magically sharpened sword with the ability to slice through armor like paper.

Even Nigan himself wouldn't be able to win against Gazef if he was supported by the treasures' blessings which improved both his offensive and defensive capabilities. No, among all the humans, there should be no one capable of defeating him. But right now he didn't have those treasures, so victory was assured. "Also… We still have a trump card. This is a battle that we cannot lose."

Nigan placed one of his hands on his chest. In this world, there were three magical items that were unimaginably powerful.

One of these treasures was left behind by the Eight Kings of Greed who briefly ruled this world five hundred years ago. Another one came from an age long before the Eight Kings of Greed was defeated, when dragons still ruled over the world; a hidden tool created by the magic of the highest ranking Dragon Lord. The last one was a treasure left behind six-hundred years ago by the Six Great Gods; it was the basis of the Slane Theocracy's doctrine.

These were the three magical items. And in Nigan's possession was a treasure that only a selected few in the Slane Theocracy knew about, it was his sure-kill trump card. Nigan looked at the steel wristband on his wrist. Several numerals floated up, displaying that the appointed time has come. "Well then… Commence the attack." Nigan and his subordinates started to cast their magic. All of them used their high tier spells which summoned angels.

♦ ♦ ♦

"Oh… There are indeed people." Gazef, from a dimly lit room, peeked out at the silhouettes surrounding the village. He perceived three people who were keeping their distance, slowly encroaching on the village. They weren't armed and didn't wear any heavy equipment.

But this didn't mean that they would be easily defeated. Lots of magic casters disliked heavy equipment, opting instead for lighter gear. This was probably the case for these people. Floating next to them were magical beings that shone brilliantly and had wings, which made it obvious what kind of magical being they were… Angels.

Angels were magical beings summoned from another realm and many people believed that they were God's envoys, especially the people of the Slane Theocracy. Although there was no way to prove whether or not Angels were envoys of God, the Kingdom still claimed these Angels were merely magical beings. And even though the debate regarding Angels was one of the biggest reasons for conflict between the Kingdom and the Theocracy, Gazef didn't really care whether Angels were envoys or not; all he cared about was their combat prowess.

To Gazef's knowledge, Angels were stronger in comparison to other magical beings summoned with the same tier of magic. They had special abilities and could even use magic themselves. All in all, he considered them to be troublesome opponents indeed. But you had also to consider what kind of Angels they were; not all Angels were necessarily hard to deal with. These Angels were equipped with shining breastplates and had blazing longswords in their hands. Gazef wasn't familiar with this kind of Angel.

Next to Gazef, who wasn't able to gauge the Angel's true strength, stood Ainz who was also observing the situation. Ainz asked: "Where did the Angels come from? And what's their objective? This village isn't worth attacking, right?"

"Master Gown, I have no clue… If they're not after possessions, there can be only one reason for their presence." The twos' gazes meet.

"Is it because they have a grudge against Sir Warrior-Captain?"

“Since I assumed the position of Warrior-Captain, dealing with grudges is something that can't be helped. But… This is really troublesome. Since they have so many magic casters who’re able to summon Angels, it seems very likely that they belong to the Slane Theocracy… And since they're carrying out this kind of shady activity it's pretty clear that they're from one of their special intelligence teams… The so called Six Scriptures. From both the numerical and proficiency standpoints, they have the upper hand.”

Gazef, who was analyzing this thorny situation, forcibly relaxed his shoulder muscles. Although he appeared calm and collected on the surface, in his heart he felt very anxious and wrathful. *They actually forced me to leave my sacred treasures behind by using the nobility faction; I must have troubled them too much. However, if that venomous man remains in the palace it would be an even bigger problem. This opportunity to find out why he wants to kill me should be a stroke of luck. In any case, I would’ve never thought the Slane Theocracy had set its sight on me as well.* Gazef let out another “Hmmph!”

However, he lacked manpower and was absolutely unprepared. Normally he would be at the end of his wit, but perhaps he still had a joker up his sleeve. “Is that an Archangel of Fire? It looks like one, but… Why would such a similar looking magical being appear? Is it because of a summoning spell? And if that’s the case…” Gazef shifted his gaze toward the muttering Ainz and inquired with a sliver of hope: “Master Gown, are you willing to be employed?” There was no response, but Gazef could perceive Ainz's general mood.

“With respect to payment, I can guarantee your satisfaction.”

“Please forgive me for declining.”

“Even if you only lent us the knight you summoned, that would be fine as well.”

“Please forgive me for declining once again.”

“Oh… Then as decreed by the Kingdom's law, can I subject you to conscription?”

“That's a dumb alternative… I wasn't planning on saying these words, but if you intend to use the Kingdom's authority, then I would have to resist a little bit.” The two stared at each other; the first to avert his gaze was Gazef.

“…To have been wiped out before even engaging with the Slane Theocracy's men, how frightful.”

“Wiped out… You sure know how to jest. In any case, for understanding my position in this matter, I am very grateful.” Gazef closed his eyes, carefully examining the bowing Ainz who was expressing his thanks. Gazef wasn't jesting when he said “wiped out.”

His intuition screamed at him that this magic caster putting up a little resistance would result in a somewhat dangerous situation. Gazef believed it was better to trust intuition than to rely on half-baked ideas, especially when facing a life threatening situation. Who is he really? While thinking, Gazef looked toward Ainz’ bizarre mask. *What the hell is underneath this mask? Is he a person I know? Or…*

“Is something wrong? Is there something on my mask?”

"Ah, no… It's nothing, I was just thinking that this mask is very special. This mask can be used to control a magical being like that… In that case it should be a powerful item… Right?"

"Well, this is a very rare and expensive item that is unique in this world." If someone had a high-class magic item, it also meant that the ability of the individual in question was very high. By this reasoning, Ainz' chanting and magic abilities should be fairly strong. Having been unable to solicit Ainz's assistance, Gazef felt a bit dejected. Deep in his heart, he had hoped Ainz would accept this commission since he was an adventurer.

"…Continuing this is meaningless. Well then Master Gown, please take care. Thank you once again for saving the village." Gazef removed his metal gloves and reached out his to grab Ainz' hand. Normally, Ainz should have also politely taken off his own metal gloves, but he did not do so.

Gazef however didn't care and tightly held Ainz's hands, speaking his inner thoughts: "I am very grateful to you for protecting innocent villagers from being massacred. Also… I don't want to ask this of you, but I hope you can protect the villagers here again. I don't have anything to offer to you right now, nevertheless I still ask you accept my request… I beg you."

"Well this…"

"If you ever visit the Kingdom's capital, I promise that I will gift you whatever you desire. This I swear upon the name Gazef Stronoff."

Gazef freed his hand with the intent to kneel, but Ainz's hands stops him: "…There's no need to go this far… I understand, I will protect the villagers. This I swear upon the name Ainz Ooal Gown." Gazef became slightly more relieved after hearing Ainz swearing by his name: "Thank you, Master Gown. Now I can charge forward without worries."

"…Until then, please take this." Ainz took out an object and gave it to the happy looking Gazef. It was a strange little sculpture and there didn't seem to be anything special about it. But—

"As long as it is your gift, I will gladly accept it. Well then Master Gown, although it saddens me, I will be going."

"…Shouldn't we wait until nightfall before moving out?"

"The other side has a sort of 'night vision' magic. Attacking in the night would be disadvantageous for us, but not necessarily for them. Besides… Master Gown needs to be able to observe the flow of battle."

"I understand, to have such a profound sense of planning, you are worthy of your title as the Kingdom's Warrior-Captain. I wish you success, Sir Warrior-Captain."

"And I wish Master Gown a safe journey home."

Ainz silently watched Gazef's back gradually disappear. Albedo felt something change in her Master but didn't inquire further. "…Well… Upon meeting the humans here, I could only muster enough empathy to treat them as insects… But after conversing with them, I'm starting to see them as small animals."

“Is that why you vowed to protect them, using your name as guarantee?”

“Maybe… No, it’s probably because he had the resolve to face his own death…” The Warrior-Captain had a different kind of resolve than Ainz had. Ainz’s mind yearned for such a resolve.

“…Albedo, command the servants around here to knock out anyone who is hiding in ambush.”

“Right away… Ainz-sama, the Village Chief’s party is coming here.” Ainz turned towards Albedo and saw the Village Chief and two other villagers running in his direction… They were gasping for breath, panicking, and their anxiety was obvious. The Village Chief immediately opened his mouth to speak, as if even breathing was a waste of time.

“Ainz-sama, what are we supposed to do? Why is Sir Warrior-Captain leaving the village, leaving us unprotected?” The Village Chief's voice had a lot of fear in it, but there was a hint of anger as well. “…He is doing the right thing, Village Chief… The enemy’s target is Sir Warrior-Captain. If he stays here, the village will turn into a battlefield. Furthermore, it doesn’t look like the other party is willing to let you escape. He has your best interests in mind.”

“So that’s why the Warrior-Captain left… Then, then should we continue to stay here?”

“That would be a bad idea. After Sir Warrior-Captain, they will probably target the village next. As long as we remain inside their net, we won’t have any place to run to. However… Our opponents will likely have to use all their forces to subdue Sir Warrior-Captain, presenting us with a great opportunity to flee. That’s when we should escape.” That was the reason the Warrior-Captain made a big fuss about his escape. He wanted to bait the enemy into using all their forces to attack him.

After understanding the intentions behind Gazef’s actions, which had a very low chance of surviving, the Village Chief lowered his face which had turned red. For the sake of creating an opportunity for the villagers to escape, he was willing to charge onto the battlefield and sacrifice his own life. Not understanding this, even misunderstanding everything and throwing tantrums. The Village Chief was probably ashamed of himself.

“I was just assuming… Misunderstanding their good intentions… Ainz-sama, what should we do?” Even the villagers behind the chief were showing their remorse: “Although we live near the forest, we’re don’t actually have protections against demon attacks. We were just lucky, but misunderstood and thought it was safe. We didn’t even think of a method of self-defense; as result not only did we lose our dear neighbors, but we also become a burden to outsiders…”

“There is nothing you can do. The other side consists of soldiers trained for combat. If you tried to resist before my arrival here, maybe you would already have been put to the sword.”

Ainz tried to solace them, but he felt that his words were spoken in vain. Regardless of who did the consoling, it wouldn’t change the fact that the village found itself in an irredeemable disaster. One could only pray that time will heal all. “Village Chief, we don’t have time. In order to honor the intentions of Sir Warrior-Captain, we must act quickly.”

“Th-Then… Ainz-sama, what should we do?”

"…I will keep an eye on the situation, and when I see an opportunity to escape, I will protect everyone while they do so."

"I am always troubling Ainz-sama, this is truly…"

"…Don't worry. I have already made a promise to Sir Warrior-Captain… For brevity's sake, please gather all the villagers in a big house; then I will cast my defense magic on it."

Part 4

The horse's excitement reverberated from its trotting hooves. Even if it received training as a steed of war… No, because it was trained as a steed of war, it was especially perceptive as to when it was approaching the grounds of death. There were only four or five enemies trying to surround the whole village. This meant that there was a huge gap between each one. If that was the case, shouldn't they have some sort of method to ensure that not even a mouse would escape from their net? In other words, lethal traps might be somewhere in the vicinity.

All things considered, Gazef still decided to force his way through. No, considering the situation, this was the only option. Upon gauging the distance between the enemy and himself, Gazef decided that a long-distance engagement would be extremely disadvantageous. Defending here would be more foolish than simply charging ahead. If he had an archer by his side this would be a completely different matter, but right now he had to avoid engaging the magic casters at long range.

It would've been marvelous if the houses were made of stone or if the village was a fortified city. But using wooden cottages to defend against magic attacks was a really bad idea. They might just as well burn along with the whole building. There was only one idea left, but only a heretic would take it.

That was to let the village become a battlefield and force Ainz Ooal Gown to engage in combat. But carrying out this plan that would completely destroy their original goal of protecting the villages. That was why Gazef was willing to fight under these dangerous circumstances: "After engaging the enemy, immediately lure the encirclement net over here, then quickly retreat. Don't miss any opportunities."

Upon hearing the fierce replies behind him, Gazef furrowed his brows. How many of them will survive this battle? These men weren't stronger than any other humans, nor were they born with any superpowers. They were simply men training their hardest under Gazef's direction. To lose these men, the fruits of his meticulous labor and hard work, would be a pity. Even if he decided to jump into danger, these men would still follow him willingly.

Gazef wanted to apologize to his subordinates for dragging them into this, but after turning his head and looking at their faces, he swallowed his words. The expression of the soldiers behind him showed that they were ready to follow Gazef to hell under any circumstances. His subordinates knew very well what dangers lay ahead; there was no need for any kind of apology.

They said to Gazef, who was feeling ashamed: "Don't worry about it, Captain!"

"Yeah, we came here by our own volition. We swore to fight alongside Captain!"

“Let us protect our country, both the people and our comrades!” There was nothing left to say. Gazef roared: “Charge! Tear them into pieces!”

“Ohhhhhhhhhh!” Gazef spurred his horse forward, his subordinates following. The whole force charged so fast and hard that they left a trail on the ground, as if an arrow had been shot from their original position.

The mounted Gazef picked up his bow and nocked an arrow. Even if he wasn't steady, Gazef could still shoot as if he were standing on the ground. He released the arrow and it pierced the head of one of the magic casters in front of him… At least that was the way it looked like. “Pah! Futile as expected. Maybe a magic arrow would penetrate, but… You don't have what you don't have and there's no point in whining about it either.” The arrow bounced off as if it had hit a sturdy helmet.

This absurd degree of hardness was obviously caused by magic. Gazef knew the only way to penetrate a magical shield like that would be to use a magical weapon. But since Gazef had no such weapons, he discarded this trait of thought immediately and put his bow away. The magic casters started retaliating with magic. Gazef marshalled all of his mental forces; he assumed a defensive stance in preparation to resist. Suddenly—

His steed neighed loudly; it raised its front pair of hooves and kicked violently. Seizing the reins, Gazef leaned forward and hugged the neck of his horse, relying on his agility to prevent himself from falling off. He was able to stay calm despite the sudden event, but when he thought back on what could've happened a shiver ran down his back. There were more important things to think about in front of him.

Emotionally excited, Gazef was panting heavily, his breathing in chaos. He flogged the horse on its abdomen, but it didn't budge an inch. It was as if someone with higher authority than the person mounted on its back was giving it orders. There could be only one reason for such abnormal behavior. Mind control magic…

The horse was targeted by this kind of magic. If mind control was casted on Gazef, he might resist; however, since the target was just a war horse and not a demonic beast there was no need to worry about it resisting. Gazef felt irritated at himself for not realizing how the enemy indirectly attacked him. He quickly jumped off his horse. The subordinates behind him evaded him one after the other by veering past him on both sides.

“Captain!” Most of his men approaching from the rear slowed down, trying to reach out in an attempt to haul Gazef onto their horses. But the Angels were faster, diving down from the air at high speed. Gazef brandished his sword at the Angels and suddenly flashed it once. The sword strikes of the Kingdom’s strongest knight had enough power cleave a man apart with one strike.

However, the Angel didn’t die even though it suffered heavy damage from the hit. Blood sprayed into the air, but it immediately reverted back into magic power and disappeared. “No need! Start the counter attack!” After Gazef gives orders to his men, he glares at the angel who escaped with a piercing gaze.

Even though the opponent was severely injured, it was still full of fighting spirit, trying to find a gap in Gazef’s defenses. “So it’s like this.” Gazef’s sword strokes felt off and he knew the reason

for it. There were monsters with special abilities, as long as it was not hit by a weapon made of a specific material, it would substantially reduce the amount of damage it received. The angels apparently possessed this ability, which allowed them to survive such strong hits from Gazef.

Thus… Gazef decided to gather all his strength and his blade started to shimmer with light as he prepared himself to unleash his special skill 'Focus Fighting Power'. Noticing an opportunity, the Angel brandished his flame-red sword. But—

"Too late." In the eyes of the Kingdom's strongest knight, the Angel's movements were too slow. Gazef's sword moved. This attack was a lot more powerful than the blow before, so Gazef's sword cut easily through the Angel's body. Suffering devastating damage, the body of the Angel slowly melted into the air and disappeared.

Shining brightly, the wings scattered and disappeared, creating a fascinating dream-like scene. If not for the desperate blood-filled situation, Gazef would have definitely admired it. But right now he was not in that kind of carefree mood. He looked around, intending to confirm incoming enemy attacks… And couldn't help a wry smile. The Angels received reinforcements. And Gazef knew very well these weren't normal reinforcements.

"…What am I supposed do against magic? Damn it." He cursed the magic casters who were able to easily create soldiers out of thin air. Gazef calmly counted the number of enemies around him, confirming that all the people encircling the village were here. With that the encirclement around the village should be gone.

"Now then Master Gown, the rest is up to you…" Gazef felt satisfaction, having been able to save the lives of the villagers. As he stared intensely into the eyes of his enemies, the sound of galloping horses became louder and louder. Those were the sounds of his men coming back after luring the enemy away.

"I told them to retreat after luring the encirclement out… That stupid… Prideful bunch of idiots." Using all his strength, Gazef charged. Perhaps this one moment in the battle would be the only and best opportunity. Because of the horsemen's speed, the magic casters will have to focus all of their efforts to stop them from linking up with the main force.

Considering the flow of the battle, the magic casters only had one course of action. The horses of his subordinates neighed and acted the same way as Gazef's horse did a few moments ago, they raised their hooves high and many of the horsemen fell off their horses. The Angels didn't miss this opportunity to strike.

Although the horsemen had similar fighting strength as the angels, but the horsemen were clearly at a disadvantage due to their lack of special abilities and the difference in their baseline capabilities. As expected, since there were only half as many horsemen as there were Angels, they were slowly forced into a corner. Coupled with the magical attacks of the magic casters, the gap between the two forces began to widen. One by one the horsemen fall to the ground.

Gazef couldn't bear watching their inevitable demise and cast his sight straight ahead. His target was the enemy commander. Even if he killed the commander, his opponents wouldn't retreat. But this was the only way everyone could survive. More than thirty Angels blocked Gazef's charge. He wasn't happy seeing his opponent strengthening their defense.

“Out of the way—” Gazef unleashes his hidden kill move. His hands emitted heat, which started to spread throughout his body. Gazef broke through his physical limitations, achieving hero-level strength. At the same time, he simultaneously activated various martial arts skills… An act that could be described as a warrior’s magic. Gazef’s stared at six angels flying in the surroundings.

“「Six-fold Slash of Light」!” This martial arts skill created rapid flashes. With one move he hit six enemies. Those hit were cleaved into halves, which became dissipating balls of light. The rest of the Angels gasped in of surprise while Gazef’s men cheered loudly. Although his hand ached from using his trump card, something of this degree wasn’t enough to hinder him.

As if receiving orders to stop the applause, a large number of the angels started their attack again. One of them swung at Gazef with a red flaming sword. Just when the Angel was about to hit him with its sword, Gazef immediately activated his martial arts skill and his body dodged instantly with a mist-like motion. Before the Angel even had the chance to swing its sword, it already suffered Gazef’s sword strike. This one move let the angel transform into a ball of light. Gazef attack did not end there.

“「Full Throttle」.” With movements similar to flowing water, all the angels’ strikes were taken care of. Using his unique skill, he continued to attack two angels. Like a miraculous scene, Gazef’s stubborn resistance created a trace of hope of winning for his men. However, the Theocracy would not allow such thing, and with mocking voice they extinguished the soldiers’ glimmer of hope. “How exciting. But… Let’s end this. Everyone who lost their Angel, summon replacements. Use all your magic to target Stronoff.”

His boiling emotions instantly cooled down. “Not looking good.” Gazef muttered in a low voice while he dissolved another Angel. There won’t be any applause even though Gazef continues to strike down angels. The faces of his men were full of anxiety as they readied their swords to face the enemy. Be it numbers, weapons, training or abilities, Gazef’s troop was inferior in every way.

Their only weapon… The hope of victory… Has disappeared. Gazef fought back by using his reflexes to avoid the weapons of his enemies. Although he only needed one strike to destroy an angel, the enemies’ main force was still far away. Although he hoped his men would make a difference, they were unable to break through the defense of an Angel without a Magic Weapon. They couldn’t use skills similar to Gazef’s ‘Focus Fighting Power’, nor did they have any weapon enchantments.

Even if they managed to injure the Angels, it was still difficult to cause fatal injuries. It was hopeless. Gazef bit his lips and could only continue to wield his sword. He used several instant kill moves in a row; his record for the consecutive uses of ‘Six Fold Slash of Light’ was constantly increasing. Warriors like Gazef could use up to six different martial arts skills during combat. Including the hidden move, he can use up to 7 types in battle.

He was currently using his martial arts skills ‘Body Strengthening’, ‘Mental Enhancement’, ‘Enhanced Magic Resistance’, ‘Magical Weapon Enchantment’ and martial arts skills to attack five different targets. The reason he didn’t activate his limit of seven different skills was that the amount of concentration required would be too great.

Especially ‘Six-fold Slash of Light’, which required three times as much concentration. Even for Gazef, who had only two different finishing moves, one which required him to use up all his

energy, and another one that needed up to four times as much concentration. If he could use these martial skills, he could easily defeat the Angels.

But even if he did so, they would continue to be summoned back. As long as he did not defeat the summoner, he would have to keep on facing wave after wave of Angels. Waiting for the enemy to run out of magic power was another idea, but by that time Gazef would have already exhausted all his strength. As a matter of fact, the sword in Gazef's hand was slowly getting heavier: His heart was beating erratically.

The 'Instant Counter' was a skill that made it possible to follow up on an attack: It allowed the user to return to his original posture after attacking once so that he can attack again. Although it was possible to attack again quickly, forcibly changing the posture of the body created a great burden on it.

The 'Full Throttle' technique allowed the user to temporarily speed up his mental state, increasing the speed of his attacks. But continuous usage accumulated a huge amount of mental fatigue. Together with the use of 'Six-fold Slash of Light', the burden on his body was immense, but if he didn't use it, there would be no way out of this.

"Doesn't matter how many of you come! You Angels are no big deal!" This roar full of vigor startled the Theocracy's soldiers, but immediately a calm voice made them regain their composure: "Don't mind him, that's just the roar of a beast caught in a cage. There's no need to be anxious, just wear him down slowly and avoid getting too close. The claws of this beast are long indeed."

Gazef glared at the man with the scar on his face. If he could just kill that commander, it would be possible to reverse the situation. The problem was the thing next to him, Angels different from those wielding flaming swords, in addition to the distance separating them and the many layers of defensive barriers in front of him. He was just too far away.

"The beast plans to break out. Let him know the meaning of impossible." The man's calm voice made Gazef feel impatient. Even if he used hero-level strength, for someone like Gazef who only knew about melee combat, there was almost no chance of winning. But… So what? If this was the only way to get rid of the enemies' commander, all he could do was to use his strength to break through.

With sharp eyes, Gazef began to sprint. But he knew this would be a difficult task. The Angels continuously thrust and slashed their raging flame swords at him, but he dodged them and countered at the same time, only to feel a sudden pain after defeating them. The pain felt like he was rammed in the stomach. Following at that direction, he saw a group of magic casters using some kind of a spell.

"Since you are priests, you should at least act the part by casting some healing spells, right?" As if to deny Gazef's sarcasm, he was hit by an invisible shockwave. Even if it was an invisible attack, as long as there weren't too many of them, Gazef was confident that he could react and dodge the attacks by watching his opponent's eyes.

But since there were more than thirty attacks, the best he could do was to use all his strength to protect his head by using his sword and arms as cover. He almost fell to the ground as his entire

body cried out in agony, until it reached the point where he became unable to tell which part of his body the pain was coming from.

"A-hak!" Gazef's throat couldn't stand the taste of blood, causing him to spit out a mouthful of it; the taste of iron coming from his throat made Gazef cough out a mouthful of blood. Being hit by invisible shockwaves, Gazef took a few steps back, choking, trying to avoid being hit by the Angel's sword.

He was unable to dodge the enemy's sword and luckily it bounced off his armor, but the impact of the attack still got through. He reflexively swiped at an Angel, but since he lost his balance the Angel was able to dodge easily. Breathless, Gazef's sword hand was trembling. As if his intensely fatigued body was whispering into his ears, telling him to lie down and rest.

"It's about time to enter the final phase of the hunt. Don't allow the beast to rest, order the Angels to press the attack." Even if Gazef wanted to catch his breath, after listening to the orders of their commander the Angels attacked mercilessly one after another. First he would dodge, then pierce it through the side with his sword. He would use his tough armor to block the attack of the next Angel swooping down from the sky. Although Gazef wanted to retaliate, there were just too many attacks. The accumulated fatigue sapped his strength, he could only handle one enemy at a time now.

He practically had no more energy left to activate his special skills as one by one, his men fell to the ground, allowing the enemy's attacks to focus completely on himself. He was unable to break through the enemy's encirclement and felt death slowly creep closer and closer to him. In a moment of carelessness, he nearly crumbled to his knees, but without delay he raised his spirit again and fought on. And once again the magical shockwave flew towards Gazef, hitting him as he was struggling to move. The scene in front of his eyes swayed heavily.

Not good! Gazef used all the remaining strength in his body to maintain his balance. But something seemed to be wrong with it, since all his strength started to disappear. Suddenly he felt the grassy ground pricking his face, showing that he had already fallen to the ground. Even though he tried his best to get back up, his body did not listen. At this moment, the swords carried by the Angels signified 'Death'. "Give him the fatal blow, but don't do it yourselves, send in the Angels to assure his death."

I'm doomed. His trained hand trembled nonstop; he couldn't even lift the longsword grasped in his hand, but he still wouldn't give up. Grinding his teeth, he let out a sharp growling sound. Gazef was not afraid of death. He had already taken countless lives himself, so he was mentally prepared to face the same ending on the battlefield.

As he had told Ainz before, there were people who bore grudges against him. One day, this hate would become a sword and take his life. However, he could not accept this current situation. To attack so many villages, to murder unarmed, innocent villagers just to lure Gazef into a trap. He absolutely couldn't let himself die with this kind of shame, but most of all he couldn't tolerate his own powerlessness.

"GAHHHHHHHHHHHHHH! DON'T UNDERESTIMATE ME—!" With his whole body, he let out a huge shout. With blood and saliva flowing out from his mouth, Gazef slowly stood up.

Feeling the awe-inspiring presence of a man who shouldn't even have enough strength left to take a single step, the Angels could not help but fall back.

"Hu—! Hu—!" The simple act of standing made it hard for him to breathe, his consciousness was fuzzy and his whole body felt as if it was buried under a thick layer of mud. But he couldn't rest, the moment he did everything would be over. Furthermore, even with this amount of pain, it could not be said that he would be able to understand the pain of the villagers who died.

"I am the Warrior-Captain of the Kingdom! For my beloved Kingdom, and to protect this Kingdom's people! How could I possibly lose to you scum who had tarnished this Kingdom's name!" This man will protect the villagers. So the only thing he could do is to defeat the enemy in front of him to his utmost ability. Wanting to protect the future of the people of the Kingdom. He only thought about this.

"…It's because you keep on saying such nonsense, that you'll die in this place. Gazef Stronoff." Gazef glared at the enemy commander, as he listened to his enemy's ridiculing words. "If you had just chosen to abandon the villagers in the frontier, then it wouldn't have ended like this. It's impossible for you to be unaware that your life alone is worth more than the lives of a thousand peasants. If you really loved your country, you would have abandoned these villagers."

"You and I… Will never… See eye to eye!"

"What good can you do with your current body? Stop needlessly struggling and lie down like a good boy. I shall have some pity on you and grant you a painless death."

"If you really… Think that I can no longer act, then why you don't… Come over here and cut off my head? With me looking like this… It should be really easy right?"

"…Well, looks like you're all talk. If you still want to fight, do you actually believe you have any chance of winning?"

Gazef simply stared ahead, his trembling hand holding onto his sword. Hazily looking at the enemy in front of him, not even caring about the restless Angels surrounding him. "…What a waste of time. How foolish. Once I kill you, those surviving villagers will be up next. Everything that you did up till now only served to prolong their suffering."

"Heh, heh… Hehehe…" Gazef had a smile across his face.

"…What's so funny?"

"…Heh, you're the foolish one. In that village… There's still someone stronger than me. That man is unfathomable, he'll be able to defeat all of you just by himself… Thinking about killing… The villagers he's protecting, is an impossible task…"

"…Stronger than you, the strongest warrior in the Kingdom of Re-Estize? Do you really think you can trick me with something like that? How stupid."

A smile floated onto Gazef's face. What kind of face will this person make when he encounters that unfathomable man, Ainz Ooal Gown? That would be the greatest reward Gazef could receive in the afterlife.

"…Angels, kill Gazef Stronoff." With that cold command, countless wings began to move. As Gazef ran forward with the determination to face death, a voice could be heard next to him. *Looks like it's time to tag in*.

The scenery in front of Gazef changed from blood soaked grasslands to the interior of a simple house. Around him were the figures of his men and the worried expressions of the villagers. "Th-This place is…"

"This is Ainz-sama's magically protected warehouse."

"Village Chief… Ma-Master Gown does not seem to be here…"

"No, he was here just moments ago, but he seems to have swapped places with Warrior-Captain-sama, disappearing in front of my eyes."

So it was like that, the voice in my head just now was… Gazef relaxed his body. What happens next would be out of his control. Gazef fell to the ground, the villagers rushed towards him. The Six Scriptures. An opponent the Kingdom's strongest warrior was unable to defeat. But in his mind, he did not believe Ainz would lose.

第五章 死之統治者

Chapter 5: Ruler of Death

Part 1

There wasn't a single trace left of the battle that just happened on the grasslands. The blood covering the grasslands was concealed by the afterglow of the setting sun and the smell of blood in the air was also blown downwind by the strong winds. On the grasslands stood two figures who weren't there before. Nigan, the Captain of the Slane Theocracy's Special Intelligence Forces, the Sunlight Scripture, stared at the two people in front of him in surprise…

One of them was clad in the robe of a magic caster, wearing a strange mask to cover his face and his hands were covered with metal gauntlets. His black long robe looked expensive and gave its bearer an aristocratic air. The other person wore a full set of black armor. The armor also seems to be quite amazing, surely not some cheap, widely available merchandise. Its mere appearance hinted it might be a strong magic item.

The severely weakened Gazef and his men had completely disappeared and two mysterious figures appeared instead. This must have been the doing of some kind of teleportation magic, but he had no idea what it was. A mysterious person using an unknown magic, he had to be on guard. Nigan ordered all his Angels to retreat, telling them to maintain a certain distance around himself to guard him.

Nigan cautiously observed the opponents in front of him, but then the magic caster took a step forward: "Good day, men of the Slane Theocracy. I am called Ainz Ooal Gown. It would be a great honor for me if you could simply address me as Ainz." Although a little distant, and even with the wind blowing, the voice was still very clear. Nigan did not answer, then the man calling himself Ainz continued: "The person behind me is Albedo. I wish to make a deal with everyone here, would it be possible to take a little of your time?"

Searching through his mind for the name Ainz Ooal Gown, nothing came up, it could be possible that this was a fake name. Looks like it would be better to find out what the man wanted to say, and gather intelligence from there. Judging it would be good to listen, Nigan raised his chin, motioning Ainz to continue. "Excellent. Thank you for taking the time to hear me out. First, there is one thing I want to mention, which is that there's no way for you to defeat me." Speaking in an unhesitating tone, one could hear his absolute confidence.

This was definitely not a bluff or some baseless nonsense, this man who called himself Ainz had absolute confidence in his abilities. Nigan frowned slightly. In the Slane Theocracy, nobody would say this kind of thing to people of power. "Your ignorance is saddening and you will pay for your foolishness."

"…About that, is that really the case? I was carefully observing this fight, so me standing here means that I am fully confident in my victory. Do you really think I would come out and rescue that man if I didn't believe I would win?"

Absolutely correct. If this person was a magic caster relying on spells, there would be more suitable methods. Mystics, Warlocks and Magicians would only wear light armor and most of them would avoid melee combat, instead opting to use 'Flight' magic to continuously shoot 'Fireball' from a distance.

But Ainz had chosen to come from the front, which implied he possessed at least some amount of power. Unsure of how the other party would handle the silence, Ainz continued: "If you understand, there's a question I want to ask. The Angels you summoned, you must have used the 3rd tier spell 'Summon Angel', am I right?"

A rhetorical question. Ignoring Nigan's look of disdain, Ainz continued: "The monsters you summoned are quite similar to the ones in Yggdrasil, so I was curious if it was named the same as well. Yggdrasil monsters were named after myths… Angel and demon monsters should also have something to do with myths. These angels and demons are usually related to Christianity, but with the absence of Christianity in this world, it would be very unnatural for something called an Archangel to appear. This means that within this world, there are people similar to me."

Having no idea what the other person was talking about, Nigan furiously replied: "Stop talking to yourself, where did you send Gazef Stronoff?"

"To the village."

"…What?" Not expecting the other party to answer, Nigan was puzzled, quickly concluding that the other person had a reason to answer like that: "How stupid, even if you are lying, a simple search of the village woul—"

"I am not lying, only answering the question… And to be honest, there is a reason."

"…Could it be to ask for mercy? If you can save us some time, then maybe I'll consider it."

"No no no… Actually… I heard your conversation with the Warrior-Captain… How courageous."

Ainz's tone and manner changed, looking at the mocking expression of Nigan: "You dare to shamelessly say that you would kill the villagers that I, Ainz Ooal Gown had painstakingly rescued. Nothing else would displease me more." The strong winds fluttered Ainz's robe and breezed through Nigan and his men. It was just a coincidence that the wind from the grasslands came from Ainz direction, but Nigan quickly shook off the misconception appearing in his mind, surely he was just mistaken and the wind didn't smell of death.

"…S-So you are displeased about that, magic caster. So what?" Although he was intimidated, Nigan still did not change his cynical attitude. How could the Captain of the Sunlight Scripture, who held onto the trump card of the Slane Theocracy, be afraid after hearing the words of some random guy? Absolutely not. But…

"The deal that I mentioned before is that I hope that you would quietly surrender your lives, this way you can be spared from physical pain. Otherwise, if you resist, which would be very stupid of you, you would have to pay the cost of dying in despair and misery."

Ainz took a step forward. Although it was just a step, Ainz's figure looked enormous. All the men in the Sunlight Scripture backed off. "Ahh…" Several hoarse voices came from around Nigan's

surroundings. That was the voice of fear. Full of the incredible imposing attitude of a strong fighter. This was the first time Nigan had experienced such an intense pressure. Therefore, he could understand his subordinates' fear.

Even Nigan, a veteran of countless battles who was unsure of how many times he had been on the brink of death, or how many lives he had taken, could feel the suffocating pressure emitted by Ainz, this mysterious magic caster. What his subordinates were feeling was probably even more intense. *Who the hell is he? What's this magic caster's true identity, just who is hiding under that mask?*

Ignoring Nigan's anxiety, Ainz spoke coldly: "That is the reason I did not lie. Because there is no reason to lie to men who are about to die." Ainz slowly opened his arms and took another step forward. He gave the impression of wanting a hug, but with his strange curved fingers he looked like a magic beast that was about to pounce. A chill ran down Nigan's spine. Having been on the brink of death before, he knew this feeling was a premonition of death.

"Order the Angels to attack! Don't let him get close!" With a hoarse voice, Nigan shouted his orders. Rather than wanting to boost the morale of his troops, he was simply afraid of the advancing Ainz Ooal Gown. Two Archangels of Fire, having received Nigan's orders, began to attack. Flapping their wings, they advanced by riding on the wind. The Angels made a beeline for Ainz, and didn't hesitate to stab him with their Flaming swords. Albedo who stood behind him will step forward to Ainz's front and intercept the attack.

That was what everyone expected, but nobody could believe the scene before their eyes. Nothing astonishing happened, it was the exact opposite. Absolutely nothing happened. Yes… Ainz didn't do anything, he just let the Angels pierce his body. Magic, dodging, defending or making his follower defend him, none of that happened. Surprise turned into ridicule.

They displayed an arrogant front, but all of that was just a bluff. It wasn't that Albedo didn't want to protect, Albedo was simply unable to react to the Angel's high-speed attack. After knowing the truth, it turned out to be no big deal. His subordinates sighed in relief. With his previously unexplainable anxiety, it made him embarrassingly look at Albedo: "How disgraceful. Putting up a strong facade to bluff us…"

Suddenly a doubt appeared. Why didn't Ainz's body fall? "…What are you doing? Hurry and let the Angels withdraw. His body can't fall to the ground if the swords are still stabbed into it."

"B-But we have already given the order." His subordinates replied with a voice full of doubt, and once again he looked at Ainz. The two Angels strongly flapped their wings, looking like butterflies caught in a web. With strange movements, the Angels slowly drifted to the side, but it was almost as if they were forcibly pushed aside. That was when Ainz, who had been hidden behind the Angels, could once again be seen between the two of them.

"Didn't I mention before? There is no way you can defeat me. Seriously, you need to listen properly to others." A calm voice reached Nigan's ears. Nigan was puzzled by the situation in front of him. Even though his chest and abdomen were pierced, Ainz was calmly standing still. "No way…" One of his men echoed what Nigan was thinking.

From the perspective of all the men around, the swords piercing his body were fatal. Even so, Ainz didn't appear to be in pain. And that was not the only surprise. Ainz's hands were around the throats of the two struggling Angels, holding onto them.

"Impossible…" It wasn't clear who muttered that. The body of a magically summoned Angel was created out of the summoner's magic, but even then they were definitely not light. They were slightly heavier than an adult man if you included the body armor they were equipped with; it was definitely not a weight one could easily lift with a single hand. Of course, if it was a warrior who had constant training and muscles, it might be possible to do it.

But the person in front of him didn't have any visible muscles, he seemed to be more suitable for concentrating on his studies to improve his intelligence and spells. And even if he magically enhanced his strength, if the base wasn't high enough there would be no discernible results. But why did such a thing happen? Even though he was pierced with swords, he didn't even look bothered by them.

"…There must be some kind of illusion here."

"Yeah, it must be like that! How could anyone be fine after being stabbed by swords!?"

Shouted the Theocracy's Special Forces embarrassingly loud. Although they were all used to danger and survived countless battles, they had never seen something like this before. Even Nigan and the summoned Angels couldn't believe it. A dull sound without a hint of pain, entered the ears of the doubtful Nigan and the other men.

"This is a high level physical negation special passive skill, this would render the damage of low class weapons and some low tier spells completely ineffective. At most it would let attacks below level 60 ineffective, in other words, any attack around level 60 would still hurt me. It is a 0 or 1 ability… I didn't expect that this would be useful this time. So… These Angels really do just get in the way."

Suddenly, Ainz slammed the Angels he was still clutching in his hands into the ground. The ground shook with a loud noise, the power behind that blow seemed to be beyond common sense. The Angels died, turning into countless balls of light. Of course, so did the swords pierced into Ainz's body. "If I learn the names for these angels, then maybe I can understand why you know how to use Yggdrasil's magic… But this is a matter for another time." Slowly getting up, Ainz still spoke about incomprehensible things.

But it made people even more afraid of his mysterious strength. Nigan swallowed heavily. "Alright, this game is getting boring. Did you already have enough? Since it appears that you are unwilling to accept my deal, it looks like it's my turn now." Finishing off the Angels, Ainz once again slowly opened his arms. Seemingly to prove that he held nothing in his hands. An eerie quiet passed and Ainz's voice was heard clearly by everyone. "Now it's my turn to… Kill everyone."

It was like icicles stabbing into their backs, a feeling that made people nauseous. The seasoned killer Nigan, had never experienced anything like that before. *Must retreat.* With the absence of any way to win this battle, any fights against Ainz would be extremely dangerous. But Nigan tried to

ignore his intuition. Since they finally managed to corner their prey Gazef with their trap, how could they just let him escape?

Ignoring the instinctive warnings from his gut, Nigan loudly ordered: "All the Angels attack! Quickly!" Like bullets, all the Archangels of Fire flew towards Ainz. "Really what a frisky group of people… Albedo, stand down." His voice was calm and collected despite the Angel's impending attacks. Ainz was completely surrounded by angels, but he didn't act worried despite having no gaps to escape through. When it looked like he was about to be pierced by their swords… Ainz had already finished casting his spell.

"「Negative Burst」." The air shook violently. Black light came from every direction and gathered around Ainz. It was only for a moment, but the results became immediately obvious. "Im-Impossible…" A voice came, carried by the wind. The scene in front of their eyes was just that unbelievable. Almost forty Angels were destroyed after getting engulfed by the wave of darkness. His opponent didn't use some kind of spell that banished summons. After getting hit by the black wave, the Angels looked hurt. To put it simply, Ainz had casted some powerful magic and swept away all the Angels.

Nigan couldn't help but shiver in terror. In his mind he remembered the words the Kingdom's strongest warrior, Gazef Stronoff, had said. *"…Heh, you're the foolish one. In that village… There's still someone stronger than me. That man is unfathomable, he'll be able to defeat all of you by himself… Thinking about killing… The villagers he's protecting, is an impossible task…"*

The scene in front of him confirmed those words. Nigan tried to get rid of the words in his mind, desperately trying to convince himself. As far as he knew, the members of the strongest branch, the Black Scripture, could also deal with this many Angels. It will be fine if you just think of Ainz as an opponent of that level. Even if his strength equaled the Black Scripture, there was still a chance of victory using their superior numbers.

But even among the members of the Black Scripture, would any single one of them be able to defeat all those Angels using just a single spell? Nigan shook his head to get rid of his doubts. He must not think about this question. If he gets an answer, he would really be helpless. That's why Nigan reached inside his pocket, gaining courage from the magic item kept there. He was convinced that as long as he had that item, everything would be fine. However, his subordinates couldn't do the same, so they tried other methods.

"Woo, wooahh—!"

"How could this happen!"

"Monster!"

Finding the Angels useless, his subordinates screamed and began to cast the spells they were confident in. 'Confuse Human', 'Hammer of Justice', 'Bind', 'Rain of Fire', 'Jade Coffin', 'Sacred Beam', 'Blast', 'Stalagmite Assault', 'Open Wounds', 'Poison', 'Fear', 'Curse', 'Blind'… All kinds of magic's hit Ainz. Withstanding this storm of magic, Ainz still had a calm expression.

"These are all very familiar spells… Who taught them to you? Some people from the Slane Theocracy? Or someone else? Seems like there are more and more things that I have to find out."

Not only could he kill an Angel with a single blow, he was also immune to magic. Nigan felt like he was trapped in a nightmare world.

"Yiiii—!" Because none of the magic had any effect, one of his men shrieked strangely and took out an iron ball for a catapult. Nigan thought that if an Angel's sword was unable to cause harm, what use would an iron ball be? But he still didn't stop his subordinate's actions. An iron ball capable of easily crushing human bones flew accurately towards Ainz. The sound of an explosion could be heard. Instantly—

It really happened in an instant. When someone is fighting, one cannot let his eyes stray from the target. But Albedo, who ought to have been standing behind Ainz, suddenly appeared in front of him. The place where she stood at from before swelled because of a strong kick that was the reason for the sound. Albedo, with speed that was nearly impossible to see, raised the long axe held in her hand. Drawing a beautiful faded green trail in the air. Following that, the men carrying the iron ball fell to the ground.

"…What?" No one knew what had happened before their eyes. They should be the ones attacking, but they as the attackers are getting beaten down. One of the men began running to check on his comrades and finding them dead, he shouted: "Hi-His head was smashed by the iron ball!"

"…What? The iron ball… Wasn't that the iron ball that was just flying there!?" Why were they being killed by the iron ball that they just launched? At this point, the wind carried a voice into Nigan's ear.

"Terribly sorry, it looks like my subordinate had used the two spells, 'Anti-Missile Shield' and 'Reflect Missile' to send it back. It seems that you have casted barriers that resist projectiles, but an attack that is stronger than the defenses will still break through right? No need to be so surprised." Ignoring Nigan after explaining what happened, Ainz then turned towards Albedo: "However, Albedo, you should know that those kinds of ranged weaponry would not be able to hurt me. There was no need—"

"Please wait, Ainz-sama. If they want to challenge the Supreme Overlord to a fight, they need to reach some standard in strength first. That iron ball attack… Was too rude!"

"Ha-ha, that is like saying that Nigan and his men have no qualifications, am I right?"

"Wuu! Heh! Principality of Observation! Come!" Hearing Nigan's orders, the Angels who were lightly flapping their wings began to move. Principality of Observation were Angels who wore a full body of armor. In one hand they held a huge warhammer, the other held a round shield. A long robe covering up their legs. Angels who were stronger than the Archangels, the reason why they were not used till today was because of their special ability.

The Principality of Observation, just as their name implies, enhance the defensive capabilities of all allied forces within their line of sight. They would lose that ability if they weren't still, so making the Principality of Observation stay back was a wise move. The fact that the order to move out was given, showed that Nigan was at his wit's end. As long as there was a chance of survival, even if it was just a blade of grass, he would grasp onto it.

“Stand down, Albedo.” The Angels who had accepted the command appeared in front of Ainz in the length of a breath, and raised their shining warhammers. Ainz impatiently stretched out his gauntlet gloved left hand to engage. Although it was a strike that would normally break his bones, but Ainz’s hands were safe, he just calmly withstood the multiple attacks of the Angels.

“Oya, oya… Looks like it’s my turn to attack. 「Hellfire」.” From the finger of Ainz’s stretched out right hand, a small flame appeared, looking like at any moment it would be blown out, it attached itself to a nearby Principality of Observation. On the body of the shining Angel, that flame was so small that it was a joke. But—

The Principality of Observation’s body was instantly engulfed in a black flame, a flame so strong that even Nigan who was so far away could feel the heat, so much so that his eyes were unable to open. Within the imposing black flame, the Angel’s body melted away with no resistance. The black flame faded away after consuming its target. There wasn’t a trace left on the scene. The previous scene… The attacking Angel the burning black flame, it all seemed like an illusion.

“Ho-How is that possible?”

“With only one blow…”

“Yii!”

“Tha-That is too impossible ahhhhhhh!”

In the middle of the mess of sounds, was the sound of Nigan’s roar. Nigan had no idea he was shouting. He only wanted to translate what he was thinking into words, and unknowingly started to shout. The Principality of Observations were high level angels, also, their attack defense ratio was 3 to 7. Of all the Principalities that can be summoned with high tier spells, Principality of Observation boasted the highest defense.

Also with Nigan’s innate ability, ‘Strengthen Summoned Creature’, he was able to strengthen the abilities of all his summons. So there were very few people who could defeat his Principality of Observation. In all his life, Nigan has never met anyone who could defeat it with one spell. Even the strongest people that he knew of, the members of the Black Scripture who were almost at the physical human limits were unable to do this. That means that Ainz Ooal Gown’s strength was beyond the level of humans.

“Such a thing can’t happen! Too impossible! No one is able to just use one spell and destroy a high level Angel! Where are you from Ainz Ooal Gown!? A person like you can’t be some unknown figure! What is your real name!?” Absolutely abandoning all semblance of calm, not willing to acknowledge the fact, Nigan roared. Ainz just slowly opened his arms. Under the light of the setting sun, those arms looked blood-stained.

“…Why can’t it be possible? Only due to your ignorance, right? Or is this how this world is? There is only one thing I can tell you though.” While waiting for answers, the surroundings were silent. Only Ainz’s bright voice was an exception. “My name is Ainz Ooal Gown. This is not a fake name.”

From Ainz’s voice, pride and joy could be heard, Nigan was unable to answer due to the unknown significance of Ainz’s reply that was the current situation. Nigan was upset at his own shortness of

breath. The wind blowing across the grasslands was also very annoying. His own heartbeat was especially loud. His breath was in disarray, as if he had used up all his energy sprinting for a long time.

Although a few words floated to his mind, trying to comfort him. But looking back at the scene of his opponent being pierced by swords, or the scene of him just using one spell to destroy so many Angels, all these things were telling Nigan the same thing… That is an unimaginable monster. He cannot fight against him.

"Ca-Captain, wh-what should we do…"

"Think about it yourself! I am not your mother!" After shouting, Nigan saw the fearful expression in his subordinates' eyes, and recovered. Panicking in the face of such a monster, would be a very bad move. Gradually the sun began to set, engulfing the world in darkness. It felt like Death was opening its mouth, preparing to devour everything whole. With some effort, Nigan suppressed his fear and ordered: "Protect me! Those of you who want to live, buy me some time!"

With trembling hands, Nigan took out a crystal. Originally his men's hands were agile, but now they were bound by chains of fear, their movements became dull. Under the orders of being a shield against this monster, even though his subordinates were not afraid of death, but they will still be hesitant about it. But they would still fight to buy him some time. The magic seal inside the crystal, was able to summon the strongest Angel. This Angel alone was able to destroy the Demon God that rampaged through the land two hundred years ago.

The strongest Angel capable of destroying cities. It was impossible to estimate how much work and money they would need to summon this Angel again, but for this mysterious person, Ainz Ooal Gown, it was worth it. More importantly, if it was not summoned, but taken away instead, that would be an even worse outcome. Nigan used this to convince himself. Nigan hid his horror, scared that he will die like those that died by his hand, becoming a ball of meat.

"I am going to summon an Angel of the highest tier, hurry up and buy me some time!" With the reality of the situation explained to them, his subordinates quickened their actions. This ignited the spirit of hope within all the people around. As the opposing party, Ainz should have noticed the change but instead he was still not taking any action, he was only talking gibberish to himself:

"…Could that be a Crystal of Magic Sealing… From the degree of light coming out from it, it should be some kind of strong spell that is sealed in there right? There is also this kind of Yggdrasil item… This is, a spell to summon an Angel… Could it be Seraphim tier? Albedo, please use your special skills to defend me. Although it is unlikely that a Seraph Empyrean will appear, however if it is a High Seraph or stronger, we would have to fight with full power. No… It might be a unique monster to this world?"

While Ainz was still thinking, Nigan, using the proper methods, broke open the crystal within his hand… Sending out bright rays of light. As if a sun had appeared on the ground, the grasslands were dyed white, a slight fragrance also entered the nose. The Angel of Legend, Nigan cheered: "Look! Behold the glory of the highest ranking Angel! Dominion of Authority!"

There was a collection of shiny wings, within the numerous wings, there were tablets etched with symbols of royalty, but the head and legs could not be seen. Although its appearance was strange,

but anyone could feel that it was a Divine living being. Because the appearance of the Angel was so sudden, the surrounding atmosphere had become pristine.

A supreme incarnation of good, made everyone burst out in frenzied cheers. The men were in high spirits. This time, they would definitely be able to kill Ainz Ooal Gown. This time it was his turn to be fearful. To face the power of a God, he would know how stupid he is. Facing the overjoyed mood, Ainz with great difficulty said: "Just… Just this? This Angel…? To go against my strongest killing ability?"

Looking at Ainz's surprise, the anxious Nigan from before felt relieved, and even felt overjoyed: "That's right! Even if you're afraid there is no way out, this is the image of the highest tier Angel. Originally using him here would be a waste, but I judge that you have that value."

"How could this be…?" Ainz slowly raised his hand, and placed it on the mask on his face. In Nigan's eyes, this was a move of despair. "Ainz Ooal Gown. Honestly saying, it is truly respectable that you made me summon the highest tier Angel against you. You are a magic caster who possesses fearful powers of magic, be proud of it!"

Nigan then nodded heavily: "Personally, I would really like to make you one of my comrades. Even now your strength is so great… But you must forgive me, the situation this time does not allow for it. At least we will remember you. Remember you as the magic caster who made me summon the highest tier Angel."

But replying to Nigan's praise, a cold voice replied: "Really… How boring."

"What?" Nigan did not know what Ainz was saying. For Nigan, facing the highest tier Angel which humanity could never possibly defeat, Ainz was simply just a sacrifice. But his attitude was too much at ease.

"To be so on guard for such a childish game… I am terribly sorry, Albedo. To make you use your special skill."

"Please do not mention it Ainz-sama. Because we did not know what kind of unimaginable monster they would summon, so it was necessary to minimize the possibility of injury."

"Really…? No, you're right. Only I did not expect only this kind of level, how unexpected."

Finding out that the reaction of the two was full of contempt, Nigan's thinking was unable to keep up: "Even in front of the highest tier Angel, you can still put up this kind of attitude!"

Ainz was leisurely talking to Albedo, and did not even look at the highest tier Angel, which made Nigan yell uncontrollably. Feeling like he was at an absolute advantage and was enjoying it with a leisurely attitude, Nigan was overjoyed, but suddenly it immediately disappeared, and once again turned into fear. Could it be that Ainz Ooal Gown was even stronger than the highest tier Angel?

"No! Impossible! That cannot happen! There is no way that any man is stronger than the highest tier Angel! This Angel is even capable of defeating a Demon God! Facing against a mere human… It must be a bluff! Definitely a bluff!" Looks like Nigan was unable to contain his emotions. He would absolutely not acknowledge such a thing. A person capable of defeating the highest tier Angel, was not only an enemy of the Slane Theocracy, but was also standing in front of him.

“Activate 「Extreme Holy Strike」!” A tier of spells that humans could not reach, this was the 7th tier spell. Even in the Theocracy large scale rituals could not cast it, but for the highest tier Angel, the Dominion of Authority, he alone could cast it, which was the reason they called him the highest tier Angel. The spell that Nigan has ordered to be casted was the 7th tier magic ‘Extreme Holy Strike’, which was considered to be the ultimate spell.

“I know, I know. Cast it quickly, I won’t do anything. Are you satisfied?” But Ainz still looked as calm as a pedestrian crossing the road. This attitude made Nigan feel fear. This was the highest tier Angel that defeated the legendary Demon God. Possessing ultimate strength, this Angel was the strongest existence in the entire continent, and was impossible to defeat. If someone was able to defeat it…

If the unidentified magic caster in front of him could beat it. It means that the strength of this mysterious being was far beyond the Demon God. There couldn’t be such a transcended person. In response to his summoner’s expected attack, the tablet in the hands of the Dominion of Authority shattered. The fragments of the tablet slowly rotated around his body.

“I see; it can use a one-time special ability to increase the strength of a spell every time it is summoned. The ability of Dominions seems to be the same as Yggdrasil…” ‘Extreme Holy Strike’. The magic activated, the only thing that could be seen was a beam of light falling. With a sound, bluish white divine light constantly fell down, encircling Ainz who simply lifted his hand as if he was holding up an umbrella. The 7th tier… A tier that was completely inaccessible to a human.

The existence of absolute evil will be destroyed by this power, even if that existence was good, it would be the same result. The only difference was whether it would be completely eliminated, or leave behind some residue. Magic beyond the realm of human magic is so amazing. No, it would be strange if it wasn’t. But… He is still alive.

Ainz Ooal Gown, that monster, was not only not wiped out, fallen to the ground limp or completely destroyed, he was still calmly standing, letting out a mocking laugh:
“Hahahahahahaha. To be expected of a magic that has increased properties against evil… So this is the feeling of pain… Does it hurt? Of course, of course! But even though I feel pain, my thoughts are clear and it did not affect my actions.” The beam disappeared. No other effects appeared.

“Excellent, there ends another experiment.”

“It sounds as if nothing happened, no, he sounds content…” Nigan thinking about this, could only show a stiff smile on his face.

Only one person was angry. “Yo-You insignificant being!” Albedo shouted a piercing cry into the air: “You lower lifeforms! T-To dare to do this kind of thing to our most beloved ruler Ainz-sama! To make my favorite and most loved person feel pain, is to not know your own abilities! I absolutely will not forgive you, I will let you taste the most amount of pain you have ever felt until you go mad! Using acid to corrode your four limbs, then cut off your genitals, make them into mincemeat and make you eat them! After that use healing spells to cure you! Ahhhhhhhhhhh! Damn! Damn damn damn damn, my heart is about to explode!”

The black armor was moving its hands nonstop. It felt as if the world was distorting with this place as the epicenter, a dizzying sinister aura blew towards them like a storm. Something was squirming under the black full body armor, as if a huge body was about to burst out.

Nigan was aware of this, but he could only stand there dumbly, watching the monster that would devour the world break out of its cocoon. There was only one person who can stop Albedo in this world now. Ainz raised his hand and said softly: "Enough, Albedo."

With those few words, Albedo stopped moving. "…Bu-But Ainz-sama, these lower lifeforms…"

"That's enough, Albedo… Other than the weakness of the angel, everything was within my expectations, what else is there to be angry about?" Hearing that, Albedo with one hand to her chest, bowed: "…As expected of Ainz-sama, prudence is the most suitable word to describe you. Truly admirable."

"No no no, for Albedo to worry about me and even get angry, makes me very happy. But… Your smile is definitely more charming."

"Guuhuu—! Cha-Charming—! Well, thank you, Ainz-sama."

"Alright, I seem to have kept you waiting, sorry."

Nigan looked at the two of them who were still taking things easy with puzzled eyes, then finally recovered and shouted: "I know… I know your true identity! Demon Gods! You two are Demon Gods!" Within Nigan's knowledge, there were only a few beings able to be on par with the highest tier Angel's power. The Six Gods that Nigan had placed his faith in. The strongest of all the dragon race the, 'Dragon King'. The Legendary monster that was capable of destroying cities, Landfall. And also, Demon Gods.

Even hearing that the Demon Gods were all sealed by the Thirteen Heroes. From the look of the pulses of evil from before, that should have been able to release the seals on the Demon God. Meanwhile Nigan held on the faint hope, if it was a Demon God, then the highest tier Angel would still have a chance to win. "Once again! Activate 「Extreme Holy Strike」!"

Just now Ainz said he felt pain, which means that he had been hurt, maybe even standing was difficult for him. Countless "maybes", came to his mind, if he did not think this way, he would have gone mad. But Ainz would not allow a second attack. "…Looks like now it's my turn… Feel despair, 「Black Hole」." A small dot appeared on the bright body of Dominion of Authority. Then it slowly grew into a huge hole. Everything was being sucked into the empty hole.

Everyone were simply stupefied, so much so that it was ridiculous, there was already nothing in front of their eyes. The light from Dominion of Authority was gone, the surroundings lost its glory. There was only the wind blowing across the grasslands, and the sound of crickets. Suddenly a hoarse cry broke the silence.

"Just what are you…?" Nigan once again asked the incomprehensible figure. "I have never heard of the name Ainz Ooal Gown the Magic Caster… No, there is no one that should be capable of destroying the highest tier Angel. There is no such existence…" Nigan weakly shook his head: "I

only know that you have far surpassed the power of a Demon God… This is really going too far… Who are…?"

"…I already said, I am Ainz Ooal Gown. Other than this name, I am still not something well-known. Let us skip the small talk, continuing to say anything more would be a waste of time. Also, in order to not waste your efforts, I have to tell you some things, I have already stopped the ability to use teleportation magic here. In addition, my subordinates nearby are waiting in ambush, so you have no means of escape."

The sun had completely set, and the surroundings were slowly being engulfed in darkness. Nigan knew it was over, this was absolutely true. Just as all his men felt demoralized, a hole appeared from out of nowhere, like a clay pot. But it quickly disappeared, returning the original scene.

While Nigan was confused, Ainz answered: "Oya oya… You guys better thank me. Looks like there is someone who has been using Intelligence Magic to monitor you, but because I am also within range of effect, I was also able to resist the spell by using an Anti-Information Magic Wall, so I won't be subject to surveillance… Ahh, if I had known this would happen, I would have prepared some higher tier counter spells."

That speech made Nigan understand why. The Slane Theocracy must definitely be monitoring him. "With some strengthening, I could influence a huge area with 'Burst' and maybe let that peeper learn a lesson… With that, the game is now over." Understanding the meaning of those words, Nigan felt a chill up his spine. They were usually in the other position, but now they were the victims. He was afraid. Afraid that of all the lives that he had taken on his own, now his life was able to be taken. His subordinates saw the fear in his eyes, truly upsetting them. They were on the brink of crying.

He wanted to kneel down and beg for mercy, but Ainz did not look like a person that was that compassionate. So Nigan held back his tears and tried desperately to find a lifeline. But no matter how much he thought, he could not think of any foreign aid. The only way he could think of was to appeal to Ainz's compassion.

"Wa-Wait a moment! Lord Ainz Ooal Gown… No, Master! Please wait a moment, we… No, I want to make a deal with you! It will definitely be no loss to you! As long as you can spare my life, I will prepare any amount of gold you want!"

Throughout his field of vision, he could spot some of his subordinates showing expressions of surprise, but they weren't significant to him anymore. At the moment the most important thing was one's own life, everything else is insignificant. Also, he could always replace his troops, but he himself would be irreplaceable.

Ignoring the countless sounds of complaint, Nigan continued: "To satisfy a great magic caster like yourself, would surely be difficult, but I will definitely prepare you a satisfactory amount of gold! I have a strong position in my country, the state will be willing to spare no cost in saving me! Of course, if you have any other demands, I would gladly oblige! I beg of you! Please have mercy!" With those words Nigan began panting.

"S-So how is it? Master Ainz Ooal Gown!" Towards Nigan's pleading face, the gentle voice of Albedo replied: "Did you not previously refuse Supreme Ainz-sama's compassionate deal before?"

"That was!"

"…I understand what you want to say. Because even if you had accepted the offer, it would have ended with a dead end, so you wanted to beg for mercy is it?" The black helmet slowly shook her head, as if she couldn't take it anymore: "I see you are confused about the situation. As Ainz-sama, the one who holds the power in Nazarick, has already said, humans, you lower lifeforms should bow your head down and be thankful, waiting for death." Albedo with an unyielding tone, flatly said so.

Crazy. This woman is completely insane. Realizing this, Nigan look at Ainz with a glimmer of hope. Quietly listening to this conversation, Ainz knew that they were waiting for his decision, he shook his head and said: "It… Is so. Do not unnecessarily struggle, obediently lay down and await death. This way I can send you off without any pain."

Part 2

Walking on the grass plain after night had fallen, the beautiful stars were visible when you looked up. Ainz was in awe after seeing this scene a second time and walked silently to the village. He went a bit overboard. With Albedo by his side, Ainz can't act too weakly. A master has to look the part before his underlings.

Even though this time he went a bit overboard, but he still did his best playing the role of a master. He didn't know whether he made the grade, but it is fine if he didn't let Albedo down. Ainz couldn't see Albedo's "no good, Ainz is too cool. *Fufufu*" expression under her helmet, so he didn't know what she was thinking. He reviewed the day's activity.

"But Ainz-sama, why did you save Gazef?" Why? Ainz can't explain what he felt back then, so he tried to dance around the issue: "We started this trouble, so we should be the one settling it right?"

"Then why did we gift him that item?"

"This is for the schemes in the future, we will benefit if he took that with him."

The item Ainz gifted to Gazef was an Yggdrasil cash items, which he possessed in great number. He might not be able to replenish his stocks, but it's not a big loss giving it to Gazef. Ainz was happy that the number of those items had decreased anyway. Because that consolation prize from a 500-yen capsule vending machine reminded Ainz of his wasteful and impoverished days.

After countless tries he finally got the super rare item from the machine, but his comrade from the past, Yamaiko, got it on her first try. The impact still left some trauma in Ainz's heart. Ainz had thought of throwing the consolation prize away countless times, but once he remembered that it had cost 500 yen… He couldn't do it.

"It wouldn't hurt me no matter where that item goes or if it will ever be used."

"…Letting me handle it would be the best way right? Ainz-sama, you don't need to act personally to aid these lowly creatures… The people that were encircling Gazef were no big deal that was why I proposed that Ainz-sama need not to act in person."

"I see…"

Ainz who didn't have a power scouter can only answer that way. In Yggdrasil, it was possible to judge the strength of an enemy based on the color of their names. After that, you can only rely on information from comrades and online guides to determine their power level. Ainz couldn't help but felt nostalgic. If only he levelled a bit in information oriented magic… Ainz felt some regret. Of course, there was no telling if the spells can be used here or not, but if it could, he wouldn't need to be so cautious.

There was no point lamenting over things he doesn't have, Ainz decided to change the mood: "…I know Albedo's strength and I trust you. But I want you to abandon such naive thoughts, and keep in mind that an enemy stronger than me might turn up at any time. Especially now, as we are not familiar with the world, we need to be even more careful… That's why I let Gazef work for us."

"I understand now… He is a pawn used to judge how strong an enemy is. This role really suits the lowly human race."

He couldn't tell the emotions from her beneath her helmeted head, but her voice was cheerful like a flower in full bloom. As a former human who is now an undead, Ainz had been feeling for some time now that Albedo seemed to dislike humans. But Ainz wasn't sad or lonely over this. He thought it was only right for the alien races of the Great Tomb of Nazarick to harbor such thoughts.

"…That's right. But not just that. People who were in mortal danger would be more grateful to their savior. And the enemies were a special unit, the higher ups in the country wouldn't openly cause trouble over their disappearance. That's why I interfered."

"Ah… As expected of Ainz-sama, having such foresight before capturing these people, impressive!"

Ainz felt proud listening to Albedo's praise. To think of such a logical plan without contradiction in such a short time, he might have the innate talent to be an Overlord. But the moody voice of Albedo reaches Ainz's ears: "…But Ainz-sama, there was no need for you to take the hit of the angel's sword with your esteemed body right?"

"Is that so? When we came to Carne village, we had verified through the knights outside the village that high tier physical attack immunity was working normally."

"Yes, you are right. I saw it with my own eyes too. But I can't allow those lowly angels to pierce Ainz-sama's body with their swords."

"I see. You are protecting me as a shield, but I didn't think about it from your perspective. I am really sor—"

"Even if I know you wouldn't be harmed, no woman can bear seeing blades stabbing the body of the ones they love."

Ainz didn't know how to respond in this situation and quietly ignored it, continuing on towards the village. Albedo didn't press for an answer and followed quietly. The moment the duo entered the village, the death knight and the villagers encircled them. Accepting the gratitude and praises of the all the villagers, Ainz saw the figure of Gazef among them. "Oh, Sir Warrior-Captain, I'm

glad that you are okay. I should have gone in earlier, but the item I gave you took some time to activate, I am sorry that I almost didn't make it in time."

"No need to worry, I am very grateful to you sir. I am safe thanks to you… That's right, what happened to those guys?"

Noticing Gazef's tone change, Ainz spied on him nonchalantly. Gazef took off his armor and didn't equip any weapon. His face was bruised with half of it swollen, looking like a misshapen ball. But his eyes were still full of life. Ainz shifted his gaze to look at something shining, his sights falling on the ring worn on Gazef's left ring finger. He was married. It's great that his wife won't have to grief. Ainz thought as he carefully began his act.

"Well, I chased them away. I couldn't finish them all off." This was a lie, all of them were sent to Nazarick. Gazef squint his eyes for a moment, and the two of them stayed silent. A tense air lingered between them. The one who broke the silence was Gazef: "That was amazing, I don't know how to repay Master Gown's aid. Do visit my residence if you come to the Imperial Capital, I will give you a grand welcome."

"I see… I will trouble you then."

"…Master Gown, I don't know what plans you have, but would you be willing to journey with us? We will be resting in this village for some time."

"I see. I am planning to leave, but my destination isn't set yet."

"It's already late, to travel now is a bit…" Gazef paused at this point of the conversation: "My apologies, this is unnecessary worries for a powerful man like Master Gown. If you drop by the Imperial Capital, please pay me a visit, my doors will always be open for you. Other than that, I am thankful for you giving me a set of equipment from the knights attacking the village."

Ainz nodded and judged that the things he needed to do in this village were done. Unexpected events kept on popping up, it felt like he had overstayed his welcome. "Let us return, Albedo." Ainz spoke in a soft volume only Albedo can hear. She nodded happily immediately while still wearing full body armor.

Epilogue

Ainz's room was filled with elegant and high-class furniture, the floor was covered in bright red carpet. This room was usually covered in a thin veil of silence, but it was even quieter today. Even the maid that should be on standby was missing from the room. The only people present were Ainz and a Death Knight who stood in a corner.

Wanting to keep the peace and quiet, a gentle voice as sweet as honey came out of Albedo's mouth: “Reporting: The commander of the Slane Sunlight Scripture has been sent to the Frozen Prison. Intelligence will be extracted by the special intelligence officer from now on.”

“Neuronist should be fine. But I plan to conduct experiments with the corpses… You’re aware of that?”

“I do. According to the reports, we are investigating the equipment stripped from the knights, no signs of special enchantments so far. After finishing the investigation, the equipment will be sent to the treasury.”

“…Yes, that would be adequate.”

“Finally, in order to protect and monitor that village, I plan to send two Shadow Demons over. How should we deal with Gazef Stronoff?”

“Ignore the Warrior-Captain for now. More importantly, that village will be the place where we build our good relations. We might need his help someday, so it would be best to not get on his bad side.”

“Understood. I will instruct the underlings clearly. This concludes the report.”

Answering “Thanks for your hard work", Ainz looked at Albedo’s face who finished her report. Her smile was slightly different from her usual gentle smile and she seemed to be in a good mood. The reason was the ring on her left hand's ring finger which she was caressing with her right hand.

It was a sparkling Ring of Ainz Ooal Gown. It was her own decision which finger she wanted to wear her ring on, but the reason she decided on that finger was obvious. If these were Albedo’s true feelings, he should be happy as a man. But her feelings were the result of Ainz’s casual editing, causing him to feel guilty.

“Albedo… Your feelings for me are just the result of me altering you, they are definitely not your true feelings. So…” What should he say next? Was using magic to alter memories the right thing to do? Ainz couldn’t continue on. Looking at Ainz, Albedo asked with a smile: “What kind of person was I before you altered me?”

A slut. Ainz didn’t know how to say something like that. Albedo stared at Ainz who appeared cool on the outside but was panicking on the inside, and said: “I think the current me is great, so don’t feel sad Ainz-sama.”

"But…"

"But…? But what?"

He didn't answer but still felt an unfathomable atmosphere from the smiling Albedo. Albedo continued talking to a silent Ainz: "The most important thing will be…" Ainz waited for her to continue, but she only mumbled with a depressed face: "Will it bother you?"

He opened his mouth stupidly, looking at Albedo's pretty face. Her words were branded deeply into his mind… Although it was empty now… But Ainz knew what she was saying and replied in a hurry: "N-No way, how would that ever bother me." He wasn't dissatisfied with being loved by a beauty like Albedo. At least for now.

"Then it should be fine, right?"

"…Eh—"

It just didn't feel right. That's what he thought, but Ainz couldn't find a reason to contradict her. "It should be fine, right?" There was a mysterious air emitting from Albedo who repeated herself. Ainz attempted a last ditch struggle and asked: "I modified Tabula Smaragdina-san's settings, don't you want to turn back to your old self?"

"If it was Tabula Smaragdina-sama, he would definitely give his blessing with the feelings of seeing his daughter off for marriage."

"…Is, is that so?"

Was he such a guy? As Ainz thought about that, the sound of metal clanging rose. Looking at the source, he found a long sword on the floor. The Death Knight holding the sword was gone. It was summoned not long ago.

"…It disappears after a period of time if it was summoned using normal methods… Since the sword from this world was left on the ground, it wouldn't linger if equipment were used as a medium to link to the otherworld. Hence, they long for this world if it was summoned using their corpse and won't disappear? If there were a huge number of corpses, it can be used to strengthen Nazarick."

"Should we collect corpse en masse?"

"…But we can't dig up the graves from that village, alright?"

"Understood, but we would need to think of a new way to obtain fresh bodies. Okay, the Death Knight vanishing means everyone should be here. Please grace us with your presence at the throne hall with Sebas. I will go there first."

"I see. Okay Albedo, see you later."

Albedo left Ainz's room quietly and saw Sebas who was walking that way. "Sebas, you came at the right time."

“Albedo-sama. Is Momonga-sama in the room?”

“Yes, that’s right.” Albedo felt a sense of superiority when she saw Sebas still addressing Ainz as Momonga. Upon seeing her expression, Sebas lift one eyebrow: “You seemed to be in a great mood. Anything good happened?”

“That’s correct.”

The reason Albedo was happy wasn’t just because of the name, but also her conversation with Ainz. She told him she wanted to marry him, and he showed no sign of rejection or annoyance. This means… Albedo’s expression instantly changed from elegance to an evil and slutty smile. That was a smile she never showed in the presence of Ainz.

“Fufufufu. It will work, it will definitely work. The one sitting beside the Overlord will be me. Shalltear will have no choice but to give up.” Those was Albedo’s thoughts as a woman, not as the Overseer. She clenched her fist: “My succubus blood is boiling~”

♦♦♦

Throne Room.

Sebas silently followed behind Ainz who arrived after everyone. The hall was full of people on their knees showing their fealty. No one fidgeted in the hall, it was quiet enough to hear the sound of breathing. The only noise was from the master of this hall… Ainz, and his follower Sebas’ footsteps, as well as the sound of the Staff of Ainz Ooal Gown hitting the ground. Ainz ascended the steps and sat on the throne. Sebas kneeled behind Albedo at the base of the steps. Ainz watched the scene below the steps on the throne.

Almost all the NPCs were gathered here, it was a grand view of the crowd, and looked like the Hyakki Yagyō, the Night-Parade of a Hundred Demons. To create such a variety of characters, Ainz praised the imagination of the guild members in his heart. Glancing through the crowd, he realized some NPCs didn’t show up, but that couldn’t be helped. The colossally huge golem Gargantua and the 8th Floor Guardian Victim were unable to leave their posts.

Those gathered here weren't just NPCs. Although there were no replacements for the 2 who were not present, many high ranking servants handpicked by the Floor Guardians were also present in the hall. But even so… The throne hall was vast and the scene didn’t seem too crowded. He understood why his subordinates were unwilling to let lowly servants into the heart of the Great Tomb of Nazarick, the Throne Hall, but Ainz thought there was no need to be so strict.

Never mind, this is not urgent. Ainz decided to discuss that on a later date and spoke slowly: “I apologize for gathering all of you here.” Ainz apologized in an unrepentant tone. This is just for show, but apologizing was still important. Gathering everyone was Ainz’s decision alone, but this was to let his underlings know that Ainz trusted them.

“As for why I summoned everyone here, Albedo will explain in a moment. There is something more pressing that I have to inform all members of the Great Tomb of Nazarick, 「Greater Item Destruction」.” Ainz activated a spell that can destroy magical items of a certain class. A large banner dropped from the ceiling. The sign on that banner symbolized ‘Momonga’.

“I have changed my name. When you address me from now on…” Ainz pointed somewhere and everyone’s gaze followed. “Call me Ainz Ooal Gown, Ainz will do.” Ainz pointed to the banner behind the throne with the symbol of the guild Ainz Ooal Gown. Ainz picked up the staff and knocked on the ground, attracting the gaze of everyone present.

“All those who oppose state your piece.” No one objected. Albedo went along with Ainz and smiled: “We all now know the name of the Lord. Hail Ainz Ooal Gown-sama! Supreme Overlord Ainz Ooal Gown-sama, all members of the Great Tomb of Nazarick swears undying fealty to you.” The Guardians cried in unison: “Hail Ainz Ooal Gown-sama! Supreme Overlord Ainz Ooal Gown-sama who leads us! We will dedicate our all to you and swear undying fealty to you!”

“Long live Ainz Ooal Gown-sama! Everyone knows the greatness of Ainz Ooal Gown-sama and the terrifying power he possesses!”

NPCs and servants alike sing their praises. The Throne Hall erupted in cheers. Immersed in the praise of his underlings, Ainz thought: *My friends, what do you think about me hogging this glorious name? Will you be happy? Or displeased? Tell me if you have any feedback, tell me this name isn’t mine alone. I will change back and use Momonga without hesitation.*

“Well then—” Ainz looked at everyone before him. “I will announce the goal for everyone.” Ainz paused here, his subordinate’s expression turned serious. “Turn Ainz Ooal Gown into an eternal legend.” The Staff of Ainz Ooal Gown in his right hand struck the ground. The staff seemed to respond to Ainz and the crystal on it shines colorfully.

“If there are many heroes, then we will replace them all, let the entire world know that Ainz Ooal Gown is the true hero! If there are people stronger than us in this world, I will find a way other than violence. If we see a mage with numerous subordinates, we will use a different method. This is just the preparation phase, in order to let everyone know Ainz Ooal Gown is the greatest, let’s strive hard together!”

To spread this name into the ears of everyone in this world. The old members of Ainz Ooal Gown should have left Yggdrasil, but they might still exist in this world just like Ainz. That’s why he wants the name of Ainz Ooal Gown to reach the realm of legends, a name all would know. Be it the land air or sea, he wants all intelligent life forms to know. So this name might reach the ears of his comrades if they were in this world.

Ainz’s majestic voice reached every corner of the throne hall. Everyone in the throne hall made a sound and lowered their heads. A sublime sound known as prayers. The throne was empty after the master left, but the air of excitement lingered in the Throne Hall. Receiving the Supreme Overlord’s command and acting in unison motivated everyone, especially when they were bestowed an order.

“Everyone, lift your heads.” Everyone who had lowered their head in prayer looked up when they heard Albedo’s steady voice. “Everyone will do as Ainz-sama commands. Next there are still important announcements to make.” Albedo’s gaze stopped on the banner of Ainz Ooal Gown behind the throne. The NPCs and servants behind her are also staring at that banner. “Demiurge, share what Ainz-sama told to you.”

“Understood.”

Demiurge and everyone present were kneeling. But his voice was clear for all to hear. “Ainz-sama said to me as he looked up in the night sky, ‘I might exist in this place to obtain that box of jewels that belongs to no one.’ He then said: ‘No, this isn’t something that I alone should have. Perhaps it should be used to decorate the Great Tomb of Nazarick, the Ainz Ooal Gown of me and my friends.’ The jewel box refers to this world. Ainz-sama’s true wish is this.”

Demiurge smiled, but that wasn’t a gentle smile: “And Ainz-sama continued ‘conquering the world is a very interesting idea.’ So the conclusion is…” Everyone’s eyes turned sharp. These are eyes that showed strong resolve. Albedo got up slowly and looked at the face of everyone. Everyone stared at Albedo in response. At the same time, they were looking at the banner of Ainz Ooal Gown behind her.

“Understanding Ainz-sama’s true intention and making preparations is the way loyal and outstanding subordinates should act. Everyone must understand the final objective of the Great Tomb of Nazarick is to take that jewelry box, this world for Ainz-sama.” Albedo smiled as she turned and faced the banner. “Ainz-sama, we will definitely give this world to you.” Their voices reverberated in the throne hall. “Giving everything in this world to the true Overlord Ainz-sama.”

Afterword

Dear readers, hello everyone, first time we've met. I am the author Kugane. This work is a revised version of the novel 'Overlord' published online. I have added new characters, expanded and corrected the contents. I am very grateful if you had already purchased this book. If you are reading it right now, I will use my mental power to force you to pay for it at the cashier. Ugu~

The main character of the book is a skeletal mage, leading a large evil organization like the last boss of a game. I don't believe the main characters in novels and movies who rescue people without asking for anything in return. Readers who acknowledge that prioritizing yourself is the right mentality will enjoy this book. It's very direct.

Also, this work had been published online for a very long time, but I tried adding an important character when novelizing it. If she can gain popularity with everyone, I will be very happy. I have never written an afterword before. Allow me to express my thanks from here on. I want to thank my editor F-ta-san for all the trouble I caused her and So-bin-sama for accommodating my selfish request and drawing these beautiful illustrations.

Special thanks to Chord Design Studio for doing up the cover page so well and Osako-sama for correcting many of my mistakes, I am very grateful. And the readers for supporting me since my web novel days. If you did not feel this was an interesting work, it wouldn't had been novelized.

And my thanks to my friend back in college, Honey, for editing and correcting contradictions and unclear areas. I will be troubling you from now on, please take care of me. Finally, I want to thank all the readers who purchased this book. I would feel honored if you think 'Overlord' was interesting.

On a side note, I intend to edit and add in more content and stories in the 2nd volume. It feels like creating a new work and I find myself complaining that there is not enough time. If possible, please continue to support the 2nd volume. This concludes the afterword. I am very grateful. If we can continue to meet from now on, I will be very happy.

See you next time.

モモンガ

Heteromorphic
Race

[アインズ・ウール・ゴウン]

MOMONGA
[ainz ooal gown]

THE STRONGEST MAGIC CHANTER WITH THE APPEARANCE OF A SKELETON

Job	One of the Almighty 41 Supreme Beings Ruler of the Great Tomb of Nazarick		
Residence	Great Tomb of Nazarick Room in level 9		
Alignment	Extreme Evil	Sense of Justice:	-500
Racial Level	Skeleton Mage		15 lv
	Elder Lich		10 lv
	Overlord		5 lv
	Others		
Job Level	Necromancer		10 lv
	Ruler of Death		10 lv
	Others		

[Racial level] + [Job level] Total 100 level

Racial level — Job level

Total 40 level — Total 60 level

ABILITY CHART

status

	0	50	100
HP			
MP			
PHY. ATK			
PHY. DEF			
AGILITY			
MAG. ATK			
MAG. DEF			
RESIST			
SPECIAL			

アルベド

Heteromorphic
Race

ALBEDO

WARM AND CARING
DEVIL OF PURE WHITE

Job	Great Tomb of Nazarick Overseer Queen (Self Proclaimed)	
Residence	Throne Hall And a room in level 9	
Alignment	Extreme Evil	Sense of Justice: -500
Racial Level	Imp	10 lv
	Others	
Job Level	Guardian	10 lv
	Blackguard	5 lv
	Unholy Knight	10 lv
	Shield Lord	10 lv
	Others	

[Racial level] + [Job level] Total 100 level

Racial level — Job level

Total 30 level — Total 70 level

ABILITY CHART

Character 3

アウラ・ベロ・フィオーラ

Human
Race

AURA BELLA FIORA

RENOWNED TRAINER WITH AN INDOMINABLE WILL

Job	Great Tomb of Nazarick 6th Floor Guardian	
Residence	6th Floor Giant Tree	
Alignment	Neutral~Evil	Sense of Justice: -100
Racial Level	Human races don't have a Race Level	
Job Level	Ranger	5 lv
	Beast Tamer	5 lv
	Archer	5 lv
	Sniper	5 lv
	Master Tamer	10 lv
	Others	

Job level

Total 100 level

status

0 50 100

ABILITY CHART

- HP
- MP
- PHY. ATK
- PHY. DEF
- AGILITY
- MAG. ATK
- MAG. DEF
- RESIST
- SPECIAL

マーレ・ベロ・フィオーレ

Human
Race

MARE BELLO FIORE

UNRELIABLE ENVOY OF NATURE

Job	Great Tomb of Nazarick 6th Floor Guardian	
Residence	6th Floor Giant Tree	
Alignment	Neutral~Evil	Sense of Justice: -100
Racial Level	Human races don't have a Race Level	
Job Level	Druid	10 lv
	Arch Druid	10 lv
	Vanguard of Nature	10 lv
	Apostle of Catastrophe	5 lv
	Forest Shaman	10 lv
	Others	

Job level

Total 100 level

ABILITY CHART

status